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THE

WORKS

OF

THOMAS PAINE.

VOL. II.

THE

WORKS

OF

THOMAS PAINE,

SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

TO THE

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,

IN THE LATE WAR.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

PHILADELPHIA:
PRINTED BY JAMES CAREY,
No. 83, *North Second-street.*

1797.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Editor thinks it neceſſary to ſay a few words relative to this ſecond volume, before he ſends it forth to the public.

He has here inſerted many articles not to be found in any other edition of Mr. Paine's works; ſome of which were with difficulty procured.—He believes it contains the whole of his European publications, except his letter to General Waſhington, which, being a copy-right, could not legally have been publiſhed by him.

Several ſubſcribers, and others, expreſſing a wiſh to have THE AGE OF REASON omitted in their volumes, the work has been printed ſo as to accommodate them:—to this end it was neceſſary to page that treatiſe diſtinctly from the body of the work, ſo that it may be bound up at the end of the volume, or wholly omitted.

It was intended to print the names of the ſubſcribers; but the liſts have been ſo imperfectly procured, that it became expedient to abandon the idea.

Philadelphia, April 20, 1797.

CONTENTS

OF THE

SECOND VOLUME.

PROSPECTS ON THE RUBICON, - - -

Rights of Man, Part I, - - - - - - - 33

Part II, - - - - - 131

Letter to the Author of the Republican, - - - 253

Abbe Syeyas, - - - - - 257

Addreſs to the Addreſſers, - - - - - 259

Two Letters to Lord Onſlow, - - - - 301

Diſſertation on Firſt Principles of Government, - - 307

Letter to Mr. Secretary Dundas, - - - - 325

The Decline and Fall of the Engliſh Syſtem of Finance, - 337

Letter to the People of France, - - - - 360

Reaſons for preſerving the Life of Louis Capet, as delivered to the National Convention, - - - - - 363

The Age of Reaſon, Part I, - - - - - 1

Part II, - - - - - 55

PROSPECTS

ON THE

RUBICON:

OR,

AN INVESTIGATION

INTO THE

CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

OF THE

POLITICS TO BE AGITATED AT THE MEETING OF PARLIAMENT.

PREFACE.

AN expreſſion in the Britiſh parliament reſpecting the American war, alluding to Julius Cæſar having paſſed the Rubicon, has on ſeveral occaſions introduced that river as the figurative river of war.

Fortunately for England ſhe is yet on the peaceable ſide of the Rubicon; but as the flames once kindled are not always eaſily extinguiſhed. the hopes of peace are not ſo clear as before the late myſterious diſpute began.

But while the calm laſts, it may anſwer a very good purpoſe to take a view of the proſpects, conſiſtent with the maxim, that he that goeth to war ſhould firſt ſit down and count the coſt.

The nation has a young and ambitious miniſter at its head, fond of himſelf; and deficient in experience: and inſtances have often ſhewn that judgment is a different thing to genius, and that the affairs of a nation are but unſafely truſted where the benefit of experience is wanting.

Illuſtrations have been drawn from the circumſtances of the war before laſt to decorate the character of the preſent miniſter, and, perhaps, they have been greatly over-drawn; for the management muſt have been bad to have done leſs than what was then done, when we impartially conſider the means, the force, and the money employed.

It was then Great Britain and America againſt France ſingly, for Spain did not join till near the end of the war. The great number of troops which the American colonies then raiſed, and paid themſelves, were ſufficient to turn the ſcale, if all other parts had been equal. France had not at that time attended to naval affairs ſo much as ſhe has done ſince; and the capture of French ſailors before any declaration of war was made, which, however it may be juſtified upon policy, will always be ranked among the clandeſtine arts of war, aſſured a certain, but unfair advantage againſt her, becauſe it was like a man adminiſtering a diſabling doſe over night to the perſon whom he intends to challenge in the morning.

PROSPECTS ON THE RUBICON.

RIGHT by chance and wrong by ſyſtem, are things ſo frequently ſeen in the political world, that it becomes a proof of prudence neither to cenſure nor applaud too ſoon.

"The Rubicon is paſt," was once given as a reaſon for proſecuting the moſt expenſive war that England ever knew. Sore with the event, and groaning beneath a galling yoke of taxes, ſhe has again been led miniſterially on to the ſhore of the ſame deluſive and fatal river, without being permitted to know the object or reaſon why.

Expenſive preparations have been gone into; fears, alarms, dangers, apprehenſions, have been myſtically held forth as if the exiſtence of the nation was at ſtake, and at laſt the mountain has brought forth a Dutch mouſe.

Whoſoever will candidly review the preſent national characters of England and France, cannot but be ſtruck with ſurprize at the change that is taking place. The people of France are beginning to think for themſelves, and the people of England reſigning up the privilege of thinking.

The affairs of Holland have been the bubble of the day; and a tax is to be laid on ſhoes and boots (ſo ſay the newſpapers) for the ſervice of the ſtadtholder of Holland. This will undoubtedly do honour to the nation, by verifying the old Engliſh proverb, "over ſhoes "over boots."

But though Democrites could ſcarcely have forborne laughing at the folly, yet as ſerious argument and ſound reaſoning are preferable to ridicule, it will be beſt to quit the vein of unprofitable humour, and give the cauſe a fair inveſtigation. But before we do this, it may not be improper to take a general review of ſundry political matters that will naturally lead to a better underſtanding of the ſubject.

What has been the event of all the wars of England, but an amazing accumulation of debt, and an unparalleled burden of taxes. Sometimes the pretence has been to ſupport one outlandiſh cauſe, and ſometimes another. At one time Auſtria, and another time Pruſſia, another to oppoſe Ruſſia, and ſo on; but the conſequence has always been TAXES. A few men have enriched themſelves by jobs and contracts, and the groaning multitude borne the burden. What has England gained by war ſince the year 1738, only fifty years ago, to recompence her for TWO HUNDRED MILLIONS ſterling, incurred as a debt within that time, and under the annual intereſt of which, beſides what was incurred before, ſhe is now groaning? Nothing at all.

The glare of fancied glory has often been held up, and the ſhadowy recompence impoſed itſelf upon the ſenſes. Wars that might have been prevented have been madly gone into, and the end has been debt and diſcontent. A ſort of ſomething which man cannot account for is mixed in his compoſition, and renders him the ſubject of deception by the very means he takes not to be deceived.

That jealouſy which the individuals of every nation feels at the ſuppoſed deſigns of foreign powers, fits them to be the prey of miniſters, and of thoſe among themſelves whoſe trade is war, or whoſe livelihood is jobs and contracts. "Confuſion to the politics of Eu-"rope, and may every nation be at war in ſix months," was a toaſt given in my hearing not long ſince.—The man was in court to the miniſtry for a job.—Ye gentle graces, if any ſuch there be, who preſide over human actions how muſt ye weep at the vicioufneſs of man!

When we conſider, for the feelings of nature cannot be diſmiſſed, the calamities of war and the miſeries it inflicts upon the human ſpecies, the thouſands and tens of thouſands of every age and ſex who are rendered wretched by the event, ſurely there is ſomething in the heart of man that calls upon him to think! Surely there is ſome tender chord tuned by the hand of its Creator, that ſtruggles to emit in the hearing of the ſoul a note of ſorrowing ſympathy. Let it then be heard, and let men learn to feel, that the true greatneſs of a nation is founded on principles of humanity; and that to avoid a war when her own exiſtence is not endangered, and wherein the happineſs of man muſt be wantonly ſacrificed, is a higher principle of true honour than madly to engage in it.

But independent of all civil and moral conſiderations, there is no poſſible event that a war could produce benefits to England or France, on the preſent occaſion, that could in the moſt diſtant proportion recompence to either the expence ſhe muſt be at. War involves in its progreſs

ſuch a train of unforeſeen and unſuppoſed circumſtances, ſuch a combination of foreign matters, that no human wiſdom can calculate the end. It has but one thing certain, and that is increaſe of TAXES. The policy of European courts is now ſo caſt, and their intereſt ſo interwoven with each other, that however eaſy it may be to begin a war, the weight and influence of interfering nations compel even the conqueror to unprofitable conditions of peace.

Commerce and maritime ſtrength are now becoming the faſhion, or rather the rage of Europe, and this naturally excites in them a combined wiſh to prevent either England or France encreaſing its comparative ſtrength by deſtroying, or even relatively weakening the other; and therefore, whatever views each may have at the commencement of a war, new enemies will ariſe as either gains the advantage, and continual obſtacles enſue to embarraſs ſucceſs.

The greatneſs of Lewis the fourteenth made Europe his enemy; and the ſame cauſe will produce the ſame conſequence to any other European power. That nation, therefore, only is truly wiſe, who contenting herſelf with the means of defence, creates to herſelf no unneceſſary enemies by ſeeking to be greater than the ſyſtem of Europe admits. The monarch or the miniſter who exceeds this line, knows but little of his buſineſs. It is what the poet, on another occaſion, calls,

"The point where ſenſe and nonſenſe join."

Perhaps there is not a greater inſtance of the folly of calculating upon events, than are to be found in treaties of alliance. As ſoon as they have anſwered the immediate purpoſe of either of the parties, they are but little regarded. Pretences, afterwards, are never wanting to explain them away, nor reaſons to render them abortive. And if half the money which nations laviſh on ſpeculative alliances were reſerved for their own immediate purpoſe, whenever the occaſion ſhall arrive, it would be more productively and advantageouſly employed.

Monarchs and miniſters, from ambition or reſentment, often contemplate to themſelves ſchemes of future greatneſs, and ſet out with what appears to them the faireſt proſpect; In the mean while, the great wheel of time and fate revolves unobſerved, and ſomething, never dreamed of, turns up and blaſts the whole. A few fancied or unprofitable laurels ſupply the abſence of ſucceſs, and the exhauſted nation is HUZZA'D INTO NEW TAXES.

The politics and intereſts of European courts are ſo frequently

varying with regard to each other, that there is no fixing even the probability of their future conduct. But the great principle of alliancing ſeems to be but little underſtood, or little cultivated in courts, perhaps the leaſt of all, in that of England.—No alliance can be operative, that does not embrace within itſelf, not only the attachment of the ſovereigns, but the real intereſt of the nations.

The alliance between France and Spain, however it may be ſpoken of as a mere family compact, derives its greateſt ſtrength from national intereſt. The mines of Peru and Mexico, are the ſoul of this alliance. Were thoſe mines extinct, the family compact would moſt probably diſſolve.

There exiſts not a doubt in the mind of Spain, what part England would act, reſpecting thoſe mines, could ſhe demoliſh the maritime power of France; and therefore the intereſt of Spain feels itſelf continually united with France. Spain have high ideas of honour, but they have not the ſame ideas of Engliſh honour. They conſider England as wholly governed by principles of intereſt, and that whatever ſhe thinks it her intereſt to do, and ſuppoſes ſhe has the power of doing, ſhe makes very little ceremony of attempting. But this is not all—There is not a nation in Europe but what is more ſatisfied that thoſe mines ſhould be in the poſſeſſion of Spain, than in that of any other European nation; becauſe the wealth of thoſe mines, ſufficient to ruin Europe in the hands of ſome of its powers, is innocently employed with reſpect to Europe, and better and more peaceably diſtributed among them all, through the medium of Spain, than it would be through that of any other nation. This is one of the ſecret cauſes that combine ſo large a part of Europe in the intereſt of France, becauſe they cannot but conſider her as ſtanding as a barrier to ſecure to them the free and equal diſtribution of this wealth throughout all the dominions of Europe.

This alliance of intereſt is likewiſe one of the unſeen cements that prevents Spain and Portugal, two nations not very friendly to each other, proceeding to hoſtilities. They are both in the ſame ſituation, and whatever their diſlikes may be, they cannot fail to conſider, that by giving way to reſentment that would weaken and exhauſt themſelves, each would be expoſed a prey to ſome ſtronger power.

In ſhort, this alliance of national intereſt is the only one that can be truſted, and the only one that can be operative. All other alliances formed on the mere will and caprice of ſovereigns, or family connexions, uncombined with national intereſt, are but the quagmire

of politics, and never fail to become a loſs to that nation who waſtes its preſent ſubſtance on the expectancy of diſtant returns.

With regard to Holland, a man muſt know very little of the matter, not to know that there exiſts a ſtronger principle of rivalſhip between Holland and England in point of commerce, than prevails between England and France in point of power: and, therefore, whenever a ſtadtholder of Holland ſhall ſee it his intereſt to unite with the principle of his country, and act in concert with the ſentiments of the very people who pay him for his ſervices, the means now taken by England to render him formidable, will operate contrary to the political expectations of the preſent day.

Circumſtances will produce their own natural effects, and no other, let the hopes or expectations of man be what they may. It is not our doing a thing with a deſign that it ſhall anſwer ſuch or ſuch an end, that will cauſe it to produce that end; the means taken muſt have a natural ability and tendency within themſelves to produce no other, for it is this, and not our wiſhes or policy, that governs the event.

The Engliſh navigation act was levelled againſt the intereſt of the Dutch as a whole nation, and therefore it is not to be ſuppoſed that the catching at the accidental circumſtances of one man, as in the caſe of the preſent ſtadtholder, can combine the intereſt of that country with this. A few years, perhaps a leſs time, may remove him to the place where all things are forgotten, and his ſucceſſor, contemplating his father's troubles, will be naturally led to reprobate the means that produced them, and to repoſe himſelf on the intereſts of his country, in preference to the accidental and tumultuous aſſiſtance of exterior power.

England herſelf exhibits at this day, a ſpecies of this kind of policy. The preſent reign, by embracing the Scotch, has tranquilized and conciliated the ſpirit that diſturbed the two former reigns. Accuſations were not wanting at that time to reprobate the policy as tinctured with ingratitude towards thoſe who were the immediate means of the Hanover ſucceſſion. The brilliant pen of Junius was drawn forth, but in vain. It enraptured without convincing; and though in the plenitude of its rage it might be ſaid to give elegance to bitterneſs, yet the policy ſurvived the blaſt.

What then will be the natural conſequence of this expence, on account of the ſtadtholder, or of a war entered into from that cauſe? Search the various windings and caverns of the human heart, and draw from thence the moſt probable concluſion, for this is more to be depended upon than the projects or declarations of miniſters.

It may do very well for a paragraph in a news-paper, or the wild effuſions of romantic politicians, or the mercenary views of thoſe who wiſh for war on any occaſion, or on no occaſion at all, but for the ſake of jobs and contracts, to talk of French fineſſe or French intrigue; but the Dutch are not a people to be impreſſed by the fineſſe or intrigue of France or England, or any other nation. If there has been any fineſſe in the caſe, it has been between the electorate of Hanover, the king of Pruſſia, and the ſtadtholder, in which it is moſt probable the people of England will be fineſſed out of a ſum of money.

The Dutch, as is already obſerved, are not a people open to the impreſſion of fineſſe. It is loſt upon them. They are impreſſed by their commercial intereſt. It is the political ſoul of their country, the ſpring of their actions, and when this principle coincides with their ideas of freedom, it has all the impulſe a Dutchman is capable of feeling.

The oppoſition in Holland were the enemies of the ſtadtholder, upon a conviction that he was not the friend of their national intereſts. They wanted no impulſe but this. Whether this defect in him proceeded from foreign attachment, from bribery or corruption, or from the well-known defect of his underſtanding, is not the point of enquiry. It was the effect rather than the cauſe that irritated the Hollanders.

If the ſtadtholder made uſe of the power he held in the government to expoſe and endanger the intereſt and property of the very people who ſupported him, what other incentive does any man in any country require? If the Hollanders conceived the conduct of the ſtadtholder injurious to their national intereſt, they had the ſame right to expel him which England had to expel the Stuarts; and the interference of England to re-eſtabliſh him, ſerves only to confirm in the Hollanders the ſame hatred againſt England which the attempt of Lewis the XIVth, to re-eſtabliſh the Stuarts cauſed in England againſt France; therefore, if the preſent policy is intended to attach Holland to England, it goes on a principle exceedingly erroneous.

Let us now conſider the ſituation of the ſtadtholder, as making another part of the queſtion.

He muſt place the cauſe of his troubles to ſome ſecret influence which governed his conduct during the late war, or in other words, that he was ſuſpected of being the tool of the then Britiſh adminiſtration. Therefore, as every part of an argument ought to have its

weight, inſtead of charging the French of intriguing with the Hollanders, the charge more conſiſtently lies againſt the Britiſh miniſtry, for intriguing with the ſtadtholder, and endangering the nation in a war without a ſufficient object. That which the miniſtry are now doing confirms the ſuſpicion, and explains to the Hollanders that colluſion of the ſtadtholder againſt their national intereſts, which he muſt wiſh to have concealed, and the explanation does him more hurt than the unneceſſary parade of ſervice has done him good.

Nothing but neceſſity ſhould have operated with England to appear openly in a caſe that muſt put the ſtadtholder on ſtill worſe terms with his countrymen. Had France made any diſpoſition for war, had ſhe armed, had ſhe made any one hoſtile preparation, there might then have been ſome pretence for England taking a ſtep, that cannot fail to expoſe to the world that the ſuſpicions of the Hollanders againſt the ſtadtholder were well founded, and that their cauſe was juſt, however unſucceſsful has been the event.

As to the conſequence of Holland in the ſcale of Europe (the great ſtake, ſays ſome of the newſpapers, for which England is contending) that is naturally pointed out by her condition: As merchants for other nations her intereſt dictates to her to be a neutral power, and this ſhe always will be unleſs ſhe is made war upon, as was the caſe in the laſt war; and any expectation beyond what is the line of her intereſt, that is, beyond neutrality, either in England or France, will prove abortive. It therefore cannot be policy to go to war to effect that at a great expence, which will naturally happen of itſelf, and beyond which there is nothing to expect.

Let Holland be allied with England or with France, or with neither, or with both; her national conduct. conſequently ariſing out of her circumſtances, will be nearly the ſame, that is, ſhe will be neutral. Alliances have ſuch a natural tendency to ſink into harmleſs unoperative things, that to make them a cauſe for going to war, either to prevent their being formed, or to break any already formed, is the ſilleſt ſpeculation that war can be made upon, or wealth waſted to accompliſh. It would ſcarcely be worth the attempt, if war could be carried on without expence, becauſe almoſt the whole that can be hoped at the riſk and expence of a war, is effected by their natural tendency to inactivity.

However pompous the declarations of an alliance may be, the object of many of them is no other than good-will, and reciprocally ſecuring, as far as ſuch ſecurity can go, that neither ſhall join the enemies of the other in any war that may happen. But the national

circumſtances of Holland, operate to enſure this tranquility on her part as effectually to the power ſhe is not allied with, as the engagement itſelf does to the power with whom ſhe is allied; therefore the ſecurity from circumſtances is as good as the ſecurity from engagement.

As to a cordial union of intereſt between Holland and England, it is as unnatural to happen as between two individual rivals in the ſame trade. And if there is any ſtep that England could take to put it at a ſtill greater diſtance, it is the part ſhe is now acting. She has increaſed the animoſity of Holland on the ſpeculative politics of intereſting the ſtadtholder, whoſe future repoſe depends upon uniting with the oppoſition in Holland, as the preſent reign did with the Scotch. How fooliſh then has been the policy, how needleſs the expence of endangering a war on account of the affairs of Holland?

A cordiality between England and France is leſs improbable than between England and Holland. It is not how an Engliſhman feels but how a Dutchman feels, that decides this queſtion. Between England and France there is no real rivalſhip of intereſt; it is more the effect of temper, diſpoſition, and the jealouſy of conſiding in each other, than any ſubſtantial cauſe, that keeps up the animoſity. But on the part of Holland towards England, there is over and above the ſpirit of animoſity, the more powerful motives of intereſted commercial rivalſhip, and the galling remembrance of paſt injuries. The making war upon them under lord North's adminiſtration, when they were taking no part in the hoſtilities, but merely acting the buſineſs of merchants, is a circumſtance that will not eaſily be forgotten by them. On theſe reaſons, therefore, which are naturally deduced from the operative feelings of mankind, any expectation of attaching Holland to England as a friendly power, is vague and futile. Nature has her own way of working in the heart, and all plans of politics not founded thereon will diſappoint themſelves.

Any one who will review the hiſtory of Engliſh politics for ſeveral years paſt, muſt perceive that they have been directed without ſyſtem. To eſtabliſh this, it is only neceſſary to examine one circumſtance freſh in the mind of every man.

The American war was proſecuted at a very great expence, on the publicly declared opinion, that the retaining America was neceſſary to the exiſtence of England; but America being now ſeparated from England, the preſent politics are, that ſhe is better without her than with her. Both theſe cannot be true, and their contradiction to each other ſhews a want of ſyſtem. If the latter is true, it amounts to an

impeachment of the political judgment of government, becauſe the diſcovery ought to have been made before the expence was gone into. This ſingle circumſtance, yet freſh in every man's mind, is ſufficient to create a ſuſpicion, whether the preſent meaſures are more wiſely founded than the former ones; and whether experience may not prove, that going to war for the ſake of the ſtadtholder, or for the hope of retaining a partial intereſt in Holland, who, under any connection can, from circumſtances, be no more than a neutral power, is not as weak policy as going to war to retain America.

If England is powerful enough to maintain her own ground and conſequence in the world as an independent nation, ſhe needs no foreign connection. If ſhe is not, the fact contradicts the popular opinion that ſhe is. Therefore, either her politics are wrong, or her true condition is not what ſhe ſuppoſes it to be. Either ſhe muſt give up her opinion to juſtify her politics, or renounce her politics to vindicate her opinion.

If ſome kind of connection with Holland is ſuppoſed to be an object worthy ſome expence to obtain, it may be aſked why was that connection broken by making war upon her in the laſt war? If it was not then worth preſerving without expence, is it now worth reobtaining at a vaſt expence? If the Hollanders do not like the Engliſh, can they be made to like them againſt their wills? If it ſhall be ſaid that under the former connection they were unfriendly, will they be more friendly under any other? They were then in as free a ſituation to chooſe as any future circumſtances can make them, and, therefore, the national governing ſentiment of the country can be eaſily diſcovered; for it ſignifies not what or who a ſtadtholder may be, that which governs Holland is, and always muſt be, a commercial principle, and it will follow this line in ſpite of politics. Intereſt is as predominant and as ſilent in its operations as love; it reſiſts all the attempts of force, and countermines all the ſtratagem of control.

The moſt able Engliſh ſtateſmen and politicians have always held it as a principle, that foreign connections ſerved only to embarraſs and exhauſt England. That, ſurrounded by the ocean ſhe could not be invaded as countries are on the continent of Europe, and that her inſular ſituation dictated to her a different ſyſtem of politics to what thoſe countries required, and that to be enleagued with them was ſacrificing the advantages of ſituation to a capricious ſyſtem of politics. That though ſhe might ſerve them, they could not much ſerve her, and that as the ſervice muſt at all times be paid for, it could always be procured when it was wanted; and that it would be better to take

it up in this line than to embarrass herself with speculative alliances that served rather to draw her into a continental war on their account, than extricate her from a war undertaken on her own account.

From this discussion of the affairs of Holland, and of the inadequacy of Holland as an object for war, we will proceed to shew that neither England nor France are in a condition to go to war; and that there is no present object to the one or the other to recompence the expence that each must be at, or atone to the subjects of either for the additional burdens that must be brought upon them. I defend the cause of the poor, of the manufacturers, of the tradesmen, of the farmer, and of all those on whom the real burden of taxes fall—but above all, I defend the cause of humanity.

It will always happen, that any rumour of war will be popular among a great number of people in London. There are thousands who live by it: it is their harvest; and the clamour which those people keep up in news-papers and conversations passes unsuspiciously for the voice of the people, and it is not till after the mischief is done, that the deception is discovered.

Such people are continually holding up in very magnified terms the wealth of the nation, and the depressed condition of France, as reasons for commencing a war, without knowing any thing of either of these subjects.

But admitting them to be as true, as they are false, as will be hereafter shewn, it certainly indicates a vileness in the national disposition of any country, that will make the accidental internal difficulties to which all nations are subject, and sometimes encumbered with, a reason for making war upon them. The amazing encrease and magnitude of the paper currency now floating in all parts of England, exposes her to a shock as much more tremendous than the shock occasioned by the bankruptcy of the South Sea funds, as the quantity of credi tand paper currency is now greater than they were at that time. Whenever such a circumstance shall happen, and the wisest men in the nation are, and cannot avoid being, impressed with the danger, it would be looked upon a baseness in France to make the distress and misfortune of England a cause and opportunity for making war upon her, yet this hideous infidelity is publicly avowed in England. The bankruptcy of 1719, was precipitated by the great credit which the funds then had, and the confidence which people placed in them. Is not credit making infinitely greater strides now than it made then? Is not confidence equally as blind now as at that day? The people then supposed themselves as wise as they do now, yet they were miserably

deceived, and the deception that has once happened will happen again from the same causes.

Credit is not money, and therefore it is not pay, neither can it be put in the place of money in the end. It is only the means of getting into debt, not the means of getting out, otherwise the national debt could not accumulate; and the delusion which nations are under respecting the extension of credit is exactly like that which every man feels respecting life, the end is always nearer than was expected; and we become bankrupts in time by the same delusion that nations become bankrupts in property.

The little which nations know, or are sometimes willing to know, of each other, serves to precipitate them into wars which neither would have undertaken, had she fully known the extent of the power and circumstances of the other; it may therefore be of some use to place the circumstances of England and France in a comparative point of view.

In order to do this the accidental circumstances of a nation must be thrown out of the account. By accidental circumstances is meant, those temporary disjointings and derangements of its internal system which every nation in the world is subject to, and which, like accidental fits of sickness in the human body, prevents in the interim the full exertion and exercise of its natural powers.

The substantial basis of the power of a nation arises out of its population, its wealth and its revenues. To these may be added the disposition of the people. Each of these will be spoken to as we proceed.

Instances are not wanting to shew that a nation confiding too much on its natural strength, is less inclined to be active in its operations than one of less natural powers who is obliged to supply that deficiency by encreasing its exertions. This has often been the case between England and France. The activity of England arising from its fears, has sometimes exceeded the exertions of France reposing on its confidence.

But as this depends on the accidental disposition of a people, it will not always be the same. It is a matter well known to every man who has lately been in France, that a very extraordinary change is working itself in the minds of the people of that nation. A spirit that will render France exceedingly formidable whenever its government shall embrace the fortunate opportunity of doubling its strength by allying, if it may be so expressed (for it is difficult to express a new idea by old terms) the majesty of the sovereign with the majesty of the nation; for of all alliances that is infinitely the strongest and the

ſafeſt to be truſted to, becauſe the intereſt ſo formed, and operating againſt external enemies can never be divided.

It may be taken as a certain rule, that a ſubject of any country attached to the government on the principles above-mentioned is of twice the value he was before. Freedom in the ſubject is not a diminution, as was formerly believed, of the power of government, but an increaſe of it. Yet the progreſs by which changes of this kind are effected, requires to be nicely attended to.

Were governments to offer freedom to the people, or to ſhew an anxiety for that purpoſe, the offer moſt probably would be rejected. The purpoſe for which it was offered, might be miſtruſted. Therefore the deſire muſt originate with, and proceed from the maſs of the people, and when the impreſſion becomes univerſal, and not before, is the important moment for the moſt effectual conſolidation of national ſtrength and greatneſs that can take place.

While this change is working, there will appear a kind of chaos in the nation; but the creation we enjoy aroſe out of a chaos, and our greateſt bleſſings appear to have a confuſed beginning.

Therefore we may take it for granted, that what has at this moment the appearance of diſorder in France, is no more than one of the great links in that great chain of circumſtances by which nations acquire the ſummit of their greatneſs. The provincial aſſemblies already begun in France, are as full, or rather a fuller repreſentation of the people than the parliaments of England are.

The French, or, as they were formerly called, the Franks (from whence came the Engliſh word frank and free) were once the freeſt people in Europe; and as nations appear to have their periodical revolutions, it is very probable they will be ſo again. The change is already begun, The people of France, as it is before obſerved, are beginning to think for themſelves, and the people of England reſigning up the prerogative of thinking.

We ſhall now proceed to compare the preſent condition of England and France as to population, revenues and wealth, and to ſhew that neither is in a condition of going to war, and that war can end in nothing but loſs, and moſt probably, a temporary ruin to both nations.

To eſtabliſh this point ſo neceſſary for both nations to be impreſſed with, a free inveſtigation of all the matters connected with it is indiſpenſible: If, therefore, any thing herein advanced ſhall be diſagreeable, it muſt be juſtified on the ground that it is better to be known in order to prevent ruin, than to be concealed, when ſuch concealment ſerves only to haſten the ruin.

OF POPULATION.

The population of France being upwards of twenty-four millions, is more than double that of Great Britain and Ireland; beſides which France recruits more ſoldiers in Swiſſerland than England does in Scotland and Ireland. To this may likewiſe be added, that England and Ireland are not on the beſt terms. The ſuſpicion that England governs Ireland for the purpoſe of keeping her low to prevent her becoming a rival in trade and manufactures, will always operate to hold Ireland in a ſtate of ſentimental hoſtilities with England.

REVENUES.

The revenues of France are twenty-four millions ſterling. The revenues of England fifteen millions and an half. The taxes per head in France are twenty ſhillings ſterling; the taxes per head in England are two pounds four ſhillings and two pence. The national debt in France including the life annuities (which are two-fifths of the whole debt, and are annually expiring) at eleven years purchaſe, is one hundred and forty-two millions ſterling. The national debt of England, the whole of which is on perpetual intereſt, is two hundred and forty-five millions. The national debt of France contains a power of annihilating itſelf without any new taxes for that purpoſe; becauſe it needs no more than to apply the life annuities as they expire to the purchaſe of the other two fifths, which are on perpetual intereſt: But the national debt of England has not this advantage, and therefore the million a year that is to be applied towards reducing it is ſo much additional tax upon the people, over and above the current ſervice.

WEALTH.

This is an important inveſtigation, it ought therefore to be heard with patience, and judged of without prejudice.

Nothing is more common than for people to miſtake one thing for another. Do not thoſe who are crying up the wealth of the nation miſtake a paper currency for riches? To aſcertain this point may be one of the means of preventing that ruin which cannot fail to follow by perſiſting in the miſtake.

The higheſt eſtimation that is made of the quantity of gold and ſilver in Britain at this preſent day is twenty millions: And thoſe who are moſt converſant with money tranſactions, believe it to be conſiderably below that ſum. Yet this is no more money than what the nation poſſeſſed twenty years ago, and therefore, whatever her trade may be, it has produced to her no profit. Certainly no man can be

ſo unwiſe as to ſuppoſe that increaſing the quantity of bank notes, which is done with as little trouble as printing of news-papers, is national wealth.

The quantity of money in the nation was very well aſcertained in the years 1773, 74, and 76, by calling in the light gold coin.

There were upwards of fifteen millions and a half of gold coin then called in, which, with upwards of two millions of heavy guineas that remained out, and the ſilver coin made about twenty millions, which is more than there is at this day. There is an amazing increaſe in the circulation of bank paper, which is no more national wealth than news-papers are; becauſe an increaſe of promiſſory notes, the capital remaining unincreaſing in the ſame proportion, is no increaſe of wealth. It ſerves to raiſe falſe ideas which the judicious ſoon diſcover, and the ignorant experience to their coſt.

Out of twenty millions ſterling, the preſent quantity of real money in the nation, it would be too great an allowance to ſay that one-fourth of that ſum, which is five millions, was in London. But even admitting this to be the caſe, it would require no very conjuring powers to aſcertain pretty nearly what proportion of that ſum of five millions could be in the bank. It would be ridiculous to ſuppoſe it could be leſs than half a million, and extravagant to ſuppoſe it could be two millions.

It likewiſe requires no very extraordinary diſcernment to aſcertain how immenſe the quantity of bank notes, compared to its capital in the bank muſt be, when it is conſidered, that the national taxes are paid in bank notes, that all great tranſactions are done in bank notes, and that were a loan for twenty millions to be opened at the meeting of parliament, it would moſt probably be ſubſcribed in a few days: Yet all men muſt know the loan could not be paid in money, becauſe it is at leaſt four times greater than all the money in London, including the bankers and the bank amount too. In ſhort, every thing ſhows, that the rage that overrun America, for paper money, or paper currency, has reached to England under another name. There it was called continental money, and here it is called bank notes. But it ſignifies not what name it bears, if the capital is not equal to the redemption.

There is likewiſe another circumſtance that cannot fail to ſtrike with ſome force when it is mentioned, becauſe every man that has any thing to do with money tranſactions, will feel the truth of it, though he may not before have reflected upon it. It is the embarraſſed condition into which the gold coin is thrown by the neceſſity of

weighing it, and by refuſing guineas that are even ſtanding weight, and there appear to be but very few heavy ones. Whether this is intended to force the paper currency into circulation, is not here attempted to be aſſerted, but it certainly has that effect to a very great degree, becauſe people, rather than ſubmit to the trouble and hazard of weighing, will take paper in preference to money. This was once the caſe in America.

The natural effect of increaſing and continuing to increaſe paper currencies is that of baniſhing the real money. The ſhadow takes place of the ſubſtance till the country is left with only ſhadows in its hands.

A trade that does not increaſe the quantity of real money in a country, cannot be ſtyled a profitable trade; yet this is certainly the caſe with England: And as to credit, of which ſo much has been ſaid, it may be founded on ignorance or a falſe belief, as well as on real ability.

In Amſterdam, the money depoſited in the bank is never taken out again. The depoſitors, when they have debts to pay, transfer their right to the perſons to whom they are indebted, and thoſe again proceed by the ſame practice, and the transfer of the right goes for payment; now could all the money depoſited in the bank of Amſterdam be privately removed away, and the matter be kept a ſecret, the ignorance, or the belief that the money was ſtill there, would give the ſame credit as if it had not been removed. In ſhort, credit is often no more than an opinion, and the difference between credit and money is that money requires no opinion to ſupport it.

All the countries in Europe annually increaſe in their quantity of gold and ſilver except England. By the regiſters kept at Liſbon and Cadiz, the two ports into which the gold and ſilver from South America are imported, it appears that above eighty millions ſterling have been imported within twenty years.* This has ſpread itſelf over Europe, and increaſed the quantity in all the countries on the continent, yet twenty years ago there was as much gold and ſilver in England as there is at this time.

The value of the ſilver imported into Europe exceeds that of the gold, yet every one can ſee there is no increaſe of ſilver coin in England; very little ſilver coin appearing except what are called Birming-

* *From* 1763 *to* 1777, *a period of fifteen years of peace, the regiſtered importations of gold and ſilver into Liſbon and Cadiz, was ſeventy millions ſterling, beſides what was privately landed.*

ham ſhillings, which have a faint impreſſion of king William on one ſide, and are ſmooth on the other.

In what is the profits of trade to ſhew itſelf but by increaſing the quantity of that which is the object of trade, money? An increaſe of paper is not an increaſe of national profit any more than it is an increaſe of national money, and the confounding paper and money together. or not attending to the diſtinction, is a rock that the nation will one day ſplit upon.

Whether the payment of intereſt to foreigners, or the trade to the Eaſt-Indies, or the nation embroiling itſelf in foreign wars, or whether the amount of all the trade which England carries on with different parts of the world, collectively taken, balances itſelf without profit; whether one or all of theſe is the cauſe, why the quantity of money does not increaſe in England is not, in this place, the object of enquiry. It is the fact and not the cauſe that is the matter here treated of.

Men immerſed in trade and the concerns of a compting houſe, are not the moſt ſpeculative in national affairs, or always the beſt judges of them. Accuſtomed to run riſks in trade, they are habitually prepared to run riſks with government, and though they are the firſt to ſuffer, they are often the laſt to foreſee an evil.

Let us now caſt a look towards the manufactures. A great deal has been ſaid of their flouriſhing condition, and perhaps a great deal too much, for it may again be aſked, where is the profit if there is no increaſe of money in the nation?

The woollen manufacture is the ſtaple manufacture of England, and this is evidently on the decline, in ſome, if not in all, its branches. The city of Norwich, one of the moſt populous cities in England, and wholly dependant on the woollen manufacture, is, at this day, in a very impoveriſhed condition, owing to the decline of its trade.

But not to reſt the matter on a general aſſertion, or embarraſs it with numerous ſtatements, we will produce a circumſtance by which the whole progreſs of the trade may be aſcertained.

So long as thirty years ago the price paid to the ſpinners of wool was one ſhilling for twenty-four ſkains, each ſkain containing five hundred and ſixty yards. This, according to the term of the trade, was giving a ſhilling for a ſhilling. A good hand would ſpin twelve ſkains, which was ſix-pence a day.

According to the increaſe of taxes, and the increaſed price of all the articles of life, they certainly ought now to get at leaſt fifteen pence, for what thirty years ago they got one ſhilling. But ſuch is

the decline of the trade, that the caſe is directly the contrary. They now get but nine pence for the ſhilling, that is, they get but nine pence for what thirty years ago they got one ſhilling. Can theſe people cry out for war, when they are already half ruined by the decline of trade, and half devoured by the increaſe of taxes?

But this is not the whole of the misfortunes which that part of the country ſuffers, and which will extend to others. The Norfolk farmers were the firſt who went into the practice of manuring their land with marl: But time has ſhewn, that though it gave a vigour to the land for ſome years, it operated in the end to exhauſt its ſtamina; that the lands in many parts are worſe than before they began to marl, and that it will not anſwer to marl a ſecond time.

The manufactures of Mancheſter, Birmingham and Sheffield have had of late a conſiderable ſpring, but this appears to be rather on ſpeculation than certainty. The ſpeculations on the American market have failed, and that on Ruſſia is becoming very precarious. Experience likewiſe was wanting to aſcertain the quantity which the treaty of commerce with France would give ſale to, and it is moſt probable the eſtimations have been too high, more eſpecially as Engliſh goods will now become unpopular in France, which was not the caſe before the preſent injudicious rupture.

But in the beſt ſtate which manufactures can be in, they are very unſtable ſources of national wealth. The reaſons are, that they ſeldom continue long in one ſtay. The market for them depends upon the caprice of faſhions, and ſometimes of politics in foreign countries, and they are at all times expoſed to rivalſhip as well as to change. The Americans have already ſeveral manufactures among them, which they prefer to the Engliſh, ſuch as axes, ſcythes, ſickles, hoes, planes, nails, &c. Window glaſs, which was once a conſiderable article of exportation from England to America, the Americans now procure from other countries, nearly as good as the Engliſh crown glaſs, and but little dearer than the common green window glaſs.

It is ſomewhat remarkable that ſo many pens have been diſplayed to ſhew what is called the increaſe of the commerce of England, and yet all of them have ſtept ſhort of the grand point, that is, they have gone no farther than to ſhew that a larger number of ſhipping, and a greater quantity of tonnage have been employed of late years than formerly: But this is no more than what is happening in other parts of Europe. The preſent faſhion of the world is commerce, and the quantity increaſes in France as well as in England.

But the object of all trade is profit, and profit ſhews itſelf, not by

an increaſe of paper currency, for that may be nationally had without the trouble of trade, but by an increaſe of real money: therefore the eſtimation ſhould have ended, not in the comparative quantity of ſhipping and tonnage, but in the comparative quantity of gold and ſilver.

Had the quantity of gold and ſilver increaſed in England, the miniſterial writers would not have ſtopped ſhort at ſhipping and tonnage; but if they know any thing of the matter, they muſt know that it does not increaſe, and that the deception is occaſioned by the increaſe of paper money, and that as paper continues to increaſe, gold and ſilver will diminiſh. Poorer in wealth and richer in deluſion.

Something is radically wrong, and time will diſcover it to be putting paper in the room of money.

Out of one hundred millions ſterling of gold and ſilver, which muſt have been imported into Europe from South America ſince the commencement of the peace before laſt, it does not appear that England has derived or retains any portion of it.

Mr. Neckar ſtates the annual increaſe of gold and ſilver in France, that is, the proportion which France draws of the annual importation into Europe, to be upwards of one million ſterling. But England in the ſpace of twenty years, does not appear to have increaſed in any thing but paper currency.

Credulity is wealth while credulity laſts, and credit is, in a thouſand inſtances, the child of credulity. It requires no more faith to believe paper to be money, than to believe a man could go into a quart bottle; and the nation whoſe credulity can be impoſed upon by bottle conjuring, can, for a time, be impoſed upon by paper conjuring.

From theſe matters we paſs on to make ſome obſervations on the national debt, which is another ſpecies of paper currency.

In ſhort, to whatever point the eye is directed, whether to the money, the paper, the manufactures, the taxes, or the debt, the inability of ſupporting a war is evident, unleſs it is intended to carry it on by fleecing the ſkin over people's ears by taxes; and therefore the endangering the nation in a war for the ſake of the ſtadtholder of Holland, or the king of Pruſſia, or any other foreign affairs, from which England can derive no poſſible advantage, is an abſurd and ruinous ſyſtem of politics.

France perhaps is not in a better ſituation, and, therefore, a war where both muſt loſe, and wherein they could only act the part of ſeconds, muſt hiſtorically have been denominated a boyiſh, fooliſh, unneceſſary quarrel.

But before we enter on the ſubject of the national debt, it will

be proper to make a general review of the different manner of carrying on war ſince the revolution to what was the practice before.

Before the revolution the intervals of peace and war always found means to pay off the expence, and leave the nation clear of incumbrance at the commencement of any ſucceeding war; and even for ſome years after the revolution this practice was continued.

From the year 1688, (the era of the revolution) to the year 1702, a period of fourteen years, the ſums borrowed by government at different times, amounted to forty-four millions; yet this ſum was paid off almoſt as faſt as it was borrowed; thirty-four millions being paid off, at the commencement of the year 1702. This was a greater exertion than the nation has ever made ſince, for exertion is not in borrowing but in paying.

From that time wars have been carried on by borrowing and funding the capital on a perpetual intereſt, inſtead of paying it off, and thereby continually carrying forward and accumulating the weight and expence of every war into the next. By this means that which was light at firſt becomes immenſely heavy at laſt. The nation has now on its ſhoulders the weight of all the wars from the time of queen Anne. This practice is exactly like that of loading a horſe with a feather at a time till you break his back.

The national debt exhibits at this day a ſtriking novelty. It has travelled on in a circular progreſſion till the amount of the annual intereſt has exactly overtaken, or become equal to, the firſt capital of the national debt, NINE MILLIONS. Here begins the evidence of the predictions ſo long foretold by the ableſt calculators in the nation. The intereſt will in ſucceſſion overtake all the ſucceeding capitals, and that with the proportioned rapidity with which thoſe capitals accumulated; becauſe by continuing the practice not only higher and higher premiums muſt be given for loans, but the money, or rather the paper, will not go ſo far as it formerly did, and therefore the debt will increaſe with a continual increaſing velocity.

The expence of every war, ſince the national debt began, has, upon an average, been double the expence of the war preceding it: the expence therefore of the next war will be at leaſt two hundred millions, which will increaſe the annual intereſt to at leaſt ſeventeen millions, and conſequently the taxes in the ſame proportion; the following war will encreaſe the intereſt to thirty-three millions, and a third war will mount up the intereſt to ſixty-five millions. This is not going on in the ſpirit of prediction, but taking what has already been as a rule for what will yet be, and therefore the nation has but a

miſerable proſpect to look at. The weight of accumulating intereſt is not much felt till after many years have paſſed over; but when it begins to be heavy, as it does now, the burden increaſes like that of purchaſing a horſe with a farthing for the firſt nail of the ſhoe and doubling it.

As to Mr. Pitt's ſcheme of reducing the national debt by a million a year, applied to the purchaſe of ſtock, it will turn out, to ſay no worſe of it, a ridiculous and frivolous project: For if a miniſter has not experience enough to diſtinguiſh a feather in the air, and ſuch there always will be, from the god of war, nor the clamours and intereſt of thoſe who are ſeeking for jobs and contracts, from the voice and intereſt of the people, he will ſoon precipitate the nation into ſome unneceſſary war: and therefore any ſcheme of redemption of the debt, founded on the ſuppoſed continuance of peace, will, with ſuch conduct, be no more than a balloon.

That the funding ſyſtem contains within itſelf the ſeeds of its own deſtruction, is as certain as that of the human body containing within itſelf the ſeeds of death. The event is as fixed as fate, unleſs it cannot be taken as a proof that becauſe we are not dead we are not to die.

The conſequence of the funding ſcheme, even if no other event takes place, will be to create two violent parties in the nation. The one goaded by taxes continually increaſing to pay the intereſt, the other reaping a benefit from the taxes by receiving the intereſt. This is very ſtrongly ſhadowed forth, like the hand-writing on the wall, by the ingenious author of the Commercial Atlas in his obſervations on the national debt.

The ſlumber that for ſeveral years has over-ſhadowed the nation in all matters of public finance, cannot be ſuppoſed to laſt for ever. The people have not yet awakened to the ſubject, and this is taking for granted they never will. But, if a ſuppoſed unneceſſary expenditure of between five and ſix million ſterling in the finances of France (for the writer undertakes not to judge of the fact) has awakened that whole nation, a people ſuppoſed to be perfectly docile in all national matters, ſurely the people of England will not be leſs attentive to their rights and properties. If this ſhould not be the caſe, the inference will be fairly drawn, that England is loſing the ſpirit that France is taking up, and that it is an ingenious device in the miniſtry to compoſe the nation to unpopular and unneceſſary taxes, by ſhamming a victory, when there was no enemy at hand.

In ſhort, every war ſerves to increaſe every kind of paper currency

in the nation, and to diminiſh the quantity of gold and ſilver, by ſending it to Pruſſia and other foreign countries.

It will not be denied that credulity is a ſtrong trait in the Engliſh character; and this has in no inſtance ſhewn itſelf more than in miſtaking paper for money, except it be in the unaccountable ignorance of miſtaking the debt of the nation for riches. But the ſuſpicion is beginning to awake.

We will cloſe this article with obſerving that a new kind of paper currency has ariſen within a few years, which is that of country bank notes; almoſt every town now has its bank, its paper mint, and the coinage of paper is become univerſal. In the mean time the melting down the light guineas, and recoining them, paſſes with thoſe who know no better for an increaſe of money; becauſe every new guinea they ſee, and which is but ſeldom, they naturally ſuppoſe to be a guinea more, when it is really nothing elſe than an old guinea new caſt.

From this account of the money, paper, and national debt of England, we proceed to compare it with the money, paper, and national debt of France.

It is very well known that paper has not the credit in France which it has in England, and that, conſequently, there is much leſs of it. This has naturally operated to increaſe the quantity of gold and ſilver in France, and prevent the increaſe of paper.

The higheſt eſtimation of the quantity of gold and ſilver in England, as already ſtated, is twenty millions ſterling, and the quantity of paper grafted thereon, immenſe.

The quantity of gold and ſilver in France, is upwards of ninety millions ſterling, and the quantity of paper grafted thereon, trifling. France, therefore, has a long run of credit now in reſerve, which England has already expended; and it will naturally follow, that when the government of France and the nation ſhall adjuſt their differences by an amicable embrace of each other, that this reſerved credit will be brought forth, and the power of France will be at leaſt doubly increaſed. The adjuſtment of theſe differences is but the buſineſs of a day, whenever its government ſhall ſee the proper moment for doing it, and nothing would precipitate this event more than a war. The cry of war, from the injudicious provocations given by the Britiſh miniſtry, and the diſadvantageous effect of the commercial treaty, is becoming popular in France.

The near ſituation of France to Spain and Portugal, the two countries which import gold and ſilver, and her manufactures being better adapted to the warm climate of thoſe countries, than the manufac-

tures of England, give her ſuperior opportunities of drawing money into the nation, and as ſhe has but little trade to the Eaſt Indies, the money ſo drawn in is not drawn out again as in England. Another advantage is, that from the greatneſs of her dominions ſhe has no occaſion to waſte her wealth in hiring foreign troops, as is the practice with England; and a third advantage is, that the money which England ſquanders in Pruſſia and other countries on the continent ſerves to increaſe the wealth of France, becauſe a conſiderable part of it centres there through the medium of her commerce.

Admitting Great Britain and Ireland to contain ten millions of inhabitants, the quantity of money per head is forty ſhillings: The money per head in France is three pounds fifteen ſhillings, which is nearly double.

The national debt of England, compared to the whole amount of money in the nation, is as twelve to one, that is, the debt is twelve times greater than all the money amounts to.

The national debt of France, compared to the whole amount of her money, is conſiderably leſs than as two are to one, that is, her debt is not ſo much as twice the amount of her money. France, therefore, as already ſtated, has an immenſe credit in reſerve whenever the ſettlement of her preſent internal differences ſhall furniſh her with the means of employing it, and that period, ſo much to be dreaded by England, is haſtening on.

The annual intereſt of the national debt of England and France are nearly equal, being NINE MILLIONS ſterling; but with this difference, that above three millions and a half of the annual intereſt of France are only life annuities. The intereſt, therefore, of her debt leſſens every year, and ſhe will have a ſurplus up to the amount of three millions and a half, to apply to the purchaſe of that part of the debt which is on perpetual intereſt; therefore, without any new taxes for that purpoſe, ſhe can diſcharge her whole debt in leſs than a third of the time on which it can be done in England, according to Mr. Pitt's plan, with his additional tax of a million a year.

But let the event of Mr. Pitt's plan be what it may, as to reducing the debt, there is one circumſtance that cannot fail to accompany it, which is, that of making it the intereſt of government, in executing this plan, to undermine the intereſt of its creditors, or the value of the funds, for the purpoſe of purchaſing at a cheaper rate.

The plan is founded on the preſumption of a long uninterrupted peace, and that future loans would not be wanted, which cannot now be expected, for France in her turn is getting into a temper for war.

The plan naturally ſtrikes at the credit of government, in contracting further debts, for were a loan to be opened to-morrow, the ſubſcribers naturally perceiving that it was the intereſt of government to undermine them as ſoon as they became creditors, would conſequently ſeek to ſecure themſelves, by demanding higher premiums at firſt. It is a queſtion, whether a premium of thirty per cent, is now as good as ten was before, and therefore the plan, in caſe of a war, inſtead of leſſening the debt, ſerves to puſh it more rapidly on.

The miniſter certainly never underſtood the natural operation of his plan, or he would not have acted as he has done. The plan has two edges, while he has ſuppoſed it to have only one. It ſtrikes at the debt in peace, and at the credit in war.

The gentleman who originally furniſhed the miniſter with this plan, now gives it totally up. He knew its operation both in peace and war, but the miniſter appears not to have comprehended it: But if he has made a miſtake, his youth and inexperience muſt be his apology.

The plan, unleſs it ſhould be altered, that is given out for providing for the expence of the late armaments, is in reality no other than the American plan of paper money, and it is very probable that the miniſter has received it from ſome American refugee.

The plan given out is, that the miniſter is to borrow the MONEY of the bank. Here is the deluſion. The name of MONEY covers the deception. For the caſe is, that the bank do not lend the real money, but it iſſues out an emiſſion of bank-paper, and the preſumption is, that there will be no run upon the bank in conſequence of ſuch an extraordinary emiſſion, but if there ſhould, no man can be at a loſs in foreſeeing the iſſue.

There are thoſe who remember that on a former run the bank was obliged to prolong the time by paying ſhillings and ſix-pences, and it is univerſally credited that a quantity of ſilver is now preſerved in the bank for the ſame purpoſe; but the device, to every perſon of reflection, ſhews that the capital is not equal to the demands, and that the chapter of accidents is part of the bible of the bank.

It may be aſked why do not the government iſſue the paper inſtead of the bank? The anſwer is, that it is exactly the ſame thing in the end, only with this difference in the mode, that were the government to do it, it would be too viſible a ſyſtem of paper currency, and that a diſguiſe is neceſſary.

Having recourſe to the bank, is a kind of playing the bank off againſt the funds. Fighting one kind of paper againſt another, and in the combat both will be ſufferers.

In short, the deluſion of paper riches is working as rapidly in England as it did in America. A young and inexperienced miniſter, like a young and inexperienced congreſs, may ſuppoſe that he ſees mines of wealth in a printing-preſs, and that a nation cannot be exhauſted while there is paper and ink enough to print paper money. Every new emiſſion, until the deluſion burſts, will appear to the nation an increaſe of wealth. Every merchant's coffers will appear a treaſury, and he will ſwell with paper riches till he becomes a bankrupt.

When a bank makes too free with its paper, it expoſes itſelf in much the ſame manner which a government does that makes too free with its power; too much credit is as bad as too little; and there is ſuch a thing as governing too much as well in a bank as in government. But nothing expoſes a bank more than being under the influence, inſtead of the protection of government, and whenever either the property or the credit of a bank, can be commanded or influenced by a government, or a miniſter, its deſtruction is not far off.

We have now ſtated the comparative condition of England and France as to money matters. But there yet remain ſome things neceſſary to be touched upon.

It is an error very frequently committed in the world to miſtake diſpoſition for condition.

France with a much better permanent condition for war than England, is in a leſs diſpoſition to enter into one, and this diſpoſition in her is miſtaken in England for want of condition; and on the other hand, the apparent diſpoſition in England for war is miſtaken by her for a condition to undertake and carry one on.

There appears a uniformity in all the works of nature, from individual animals up to nations. The ſmaller animals are always the moſt fretful, paſſionate, and inſulting. They miſtake temper for ſtrength, and often fall a ſacrifice to vexatious impetuoſity; while larger ones go calmly on, and require repeated provocations to incenſe them. France may yet be aggravated into war, and very probably will. Where the condition exiſts the diſpoſition may at any time take place. We may create temper, but we cannot create ſtrength.

While the literature of England preſerves an honourable rank among the nations of Europe, her national character is moſt miſerably ſuffering in the world through her news papers. The moſt barefaced perfidiouſneſs, the moſt abandoned principles are daily propagated. A total diſregard to all the obligations of national faith and honour

are publicly profeſſed. Inſtead of that true greatneſs of heart, that generous diſdain of vulgar littleneſs that ought always to accompany the diſputes of nations, ſcarcely any thing is to be ſeen but mean abuſe and low ſcurrility. This is not the caſe in any other country in the world but England.

We will now proceed to conclude with a few additional obſervations on the ſtate of politics.

For ſeveral weeks the nation was amuſed with the daily rumours of ſome great cabinet ſecret, and admiring how profoundly the ſecret was kept, when the only ſecret was, that there was no ſecret to divulge.

But this opinion of a ſecret very well ſhews that the opinion of the nation was different to the opinion of the miniſter, or the ſuppoſition of ſome great ſecret would not have taken place, as the affairs of the ſtadtholder were then publicly known. It ſhews that the nation did not think the ſtadtholder of Holland a ſufficient reaſon for laying new taxes on England, and running into the riſk and expence of a war, and great was the ſurpriſe when the declaration and counter declaration, like twin mice, peeped from the cabinet.

But there is one ſecret that requires to be inveſtigated, which is, whether the miniſter did not know that France would not engage in a war, and whether the preparations were not an idle parade, founded on that knowledge.

Whether it was not meanly putting England under the banners of Pruſſia, and taking thereby a diſhonourable advantage of the internal perplexity which France was then in, and which in its turn may happen to England, to aſſume the air of a challenge, which it muſt be known would not be accepted, becauſe there was nothing to make the acceptance neceſſary.

Whether this conduct in the miniſter does not miſchievouſly operate to deſtroy the harmony that appeared to be growing up between the two nations; to leſſen, if not totally deſtroy, the advantages of the commercial treaty, and to lay the ſeeds of future wars, when there was a proſpect of a long and uninterrupted peace.

When there are two ways of accompliſhing the ſame object, it almoſt always happens that the one is better than the other; and whether the miniſter has not choſen the worſt, a few obſervations will elucidate.

It ſignifies not what airy ſchemes, projects, or even treaties may be formed, eſpecially if done under the point of the bayonet, for all that can be expected from Holland is neutrality. Her trade is with all

nations, and it is from her neutrality that this trade has arisen. Destroy this neutrality and Holland is destroyed. Therefore it matters not what sentiments party men may be of in Holland as to the stadtholdership, because there is still a superior banner under which all will unite.

Holland will not expose her trade to the devastations of England by joining France in a war, neither will she expose it to France by joining England. It may very well be asked, what are England or France to Holland, that she should join with either in a war, unless she is compelled to it by one or the other making war upon her, as was the case in the last war?

Events may soon happen in Europe to make all the force that Prussia can raise necessary to her own defence, and Holland must be wise enough to see, that by joining England she not only exposes her trade to France but likewise her dominions, because France can invade her in a quarter in which England cannot defend her, for Holland lies open to France by land. It is, therefore, more immediately the interest of Holland to keep on good terms with France, neither can England give her any equivalent to balance this circumstance. How foolish then are the politics which are directed to unnatural and impossible objects! Surely the experience of a century past is sufficient to shew to any man, except one of yesterday, what the conduct of Holland in all cases must be.

But there is another circumstance that does not fail to impress foreigners, and especially Holland, which is, that the immensity of the national debt of England, the prospect of its still increasing, and the exorbitancy of her paper currencies, render her too insecure in herself to be much confided in by foreign nations for any length of time. Because that which must happen may soon happen.

Concerning the rescript delivered by the French minister, there is one certain explanation to be put upon it, which is, that if France had been disposed for war, she would not have made that communication. The very making it goes to a full explanation of the parts; and as soon as Mr. Pitt obtained this knowledge, it appeared to him a safe moment to gird on his sword, and when he found that France was as well weaponed as himself to propose to take it off again. This is in a few words the whole history of the campaign. A war minister in peace, and a peace minister in war. Brave where there is no danger, and prudent when there is.

The rescript could be nothing else than an explanation, on the part of France, of the situation she conceived herself to be subject to,

and the probable conſequences that might follow from it. This ſhe was not obliged to make, and therefore her making it was a matter of civil communication towards a power ſhe was at peace with, and which in return entitled her to a ſimilar communication on the part of the Britiſh cabinet. All this might have been done without either the expence, the tumult, the provocations, or the ill blood that has been created.

The alliance between France and the Dutch, was formed while the ſtadtholder was a part of the government, therefore France could not from that alliance take a part either for or againſt him. She could only act when the whole intereſt of the republic was expoſed to a foreign enemy, and it was not certain that this might not be the caſe.

The reſcript, therefore, inſtead of being taken as a ground for war, was in itſelf a ground for peace, becauſe it tended to bring on a diſcuſſion of all the circumſtances of France and England relative to Holland, which would not have failed to place Holland in a ſtate of neutrality, and that only will be the final event now; becauſe, independent of all parties, no other is conſiſtent with the whole national intereſt of that republic.

But this not being done, it is now left to the Dutch to do it for themſelves.

An alliance with England, at the ſame time there is one exiſting with France, will ſecure this neutrality ſo neceſſary to the Dutch republic. By this ſtroke of politics ſhe will be free from all obligations to join with either in a war, and be guaranteed by both. Her alliance with England will debar England from moleſting her trade by ſea, and that with France will debar France from the ſame thing, and likewiſe from invading her by land in all future caſes. There are ſo many probable circumſtances to ariſe on the continent of Europe, that the ſituation of Holland requires this ſafeguard, more eſpecially from France, on account of her land connection.

The riſing greatneſs of the Ruſſian empire, the probable union of this empire with that of Germany and France, and conſequently with Spain, whoſe intereſts cannot be ſeparated, and the probability of a rupture between the emperor and the king of Pruſſia, are matters that cannot fail to impreſs the Dutch with the neceſſity of ſecuring themſelves by land as well as by ſea, and to prevent their being drawn into the quarrels either of England or France.

Upon the whole, as there was a civil as well as an uncivil line of

politics to be purſued, every man of humane and generous ſentiments muſt lament it was not choſen.

A diſpoſition for peace was growing up in every part of France, and there appeared at the ſame time a mutual one riſing in England. A ſilent wiſh on both ſides, was univerſally expanding itſelf, that wars, ſo fatal to the true intereſt and burdenſome by taxes to the ſubjects of both countries, might exiſt no more, and that a long and laſting peace might take place.

But inſtead of cultivating this happy opportunity, the pettiſh vanity of a young and unexperienced miniſter, who balanced himſelf between peace and war to take his choice of circumſtances, inſtead of principles, and who went into an expenſive armament when there was none to contend with, and not till after the affairs of Holland might be ſaid to be terminated, has deſtroyed thoſe ſeeds of harmony that might have been conſidered of more value to both nations than their fleets and armies.

He has permitted the nation to run mad under the univerſal influence of a groundleſs belief of vaſt hoſtile armaments in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies, and the ſuppoſition of a ſecret that never exiſted. By this means the ſparks of ill-will are afreſh kindled up between the nations, the fair proſpect of laſting peace is vaniſhed, and a train of future evils fills up the ſcene, and that at a time when the internal affairs of France, however confuſed they at preſent appear, are naturally approaching to a great and harmonious increaſe of its power.

THOMAS PAINE.

York-Street, St. James's Square,
20th of Auguſt, 1787.

RIGHTS OF MAN:

BEING AN

ANSWER TO MR. BURKE'S ATTACK

ON THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION.

By THOMAS PAINE,

SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO CONGRESS IN THE AMERICAN WAR,

AND

AUTHOR OF THE WORK ENTITLED

"COMMON SENSE."

TO

GEORGE WASHINGTON,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

SIR,

I PRESENT you a ſmall treatiſe in defence of thoſe principles of freedom which your exemplary virtue hath ſo eminently contributed to eſtabliſh. That the Rights of Man may become as univerſal as your benevolence can wiſh, and that you may enjoy the happineſs of ſeeing the New World regenerate the Old, is the prayer of

SIR,

Your much obliged, and

Obedient humble ſervant,

THOMAS PAINE.

RIGHTS OF MAN.

AMONG the incivilities by which nations or individuals provoke and irritate each other, Mr. Burke's pamphlet on the French Revolution is an extraordinary inſtance. Neither the people of France, nor the National Aſſembly, were troubling themſelves about the affairs of England, or the Engliſh Parliament; and why Mr. Burke ſhould commence an unprovoked attack upon them, both in parliament and in public, is a conduct that cannot be pardoned on the ſcore of manners, nor juſtified on that of policy.

There is ſcarcely an epithet of abuſe to be found in the Engliſh language, with which Mr. Burke has not loaded the French nation and the national aſſembly. Every thing which rancour, prejudice, ignorance or knowledge could ſuggeſt, are poured forth in the copious fury of near four hundred pages. In the ſtrain and on the plan Mr. Burke was writing, he might have wrote on to as many thouſands. When the tongue or the pen is let looſe in a phrenzy of paſſion, it is the man, and not the ſubject, that becomes exhauſted.

Hitherto Mr. Burke has been miſtaken and diſappointed in the opinions he had formed on the affairs of France; but ſuch is the ingenuity of his hope or the malignancy of his deſpair, that it furniſhes him with new pretences to go on. There was a time when it was impoſſible to make Mr. Burke believe there would be any revolution in France. His opinion then was, that the French had neither ſpirit to undertake it, nor fortitude to ſupport it; and now that there is one, he ſeeks an eſcape by condemning it.

Not ſufficiently content with abuſing the national aſſembly, a great part of his work is taken up with abuſing Dr. Price (one of the beſt-hearted men that lives) and the two ſocieties in England known by the name of the Revolution and the Conſtitutional Societies.

Dr. Price had preached a ſermon on the 4th of November, 1789, being the anniverſary of what is called in England the Revolution which took place 1688. Mr. Burke, ſpeaking of this ſermon, ſays, "The political divine proceeds dogmatically to aſſert, that, by the "principles of the revolution, the people of England have acquired "three fundamental rights:

"1. To chooſe our own governors.

"2. To caſhier them for miſconduct.

"3. To frame a government for ourſelves."

Dr. Price does not ſay that the right to do theſe things exiſts in this or in that perſon, or in this or in that deſcription of perſons, but that it exiſts in the *whole*—that it is a right reſident in the nation.—Mr. Burke, on the contrary, denies that ſuch a right exiſts in the nation, either in whole or in part, or that it exiſts any where; and what is ſtill more ſtrange and marvellous, he ſays, "that the people of Eng-"land utterly diſclaim ſuch right, and that they will reſiſt the prac-"tical aſſertion of it with their lives and fortunes." That men ſhould take up arms, and ſpend their lives and fortunes, *not* to maintain their rights, but to maintain they have *not* rights, is an entire new ſpecies of diſcovery, and ſuited to the paradoxical genius of Mr. Burke.

The method which Mr. Burke takes to prove that the people of England have no ſuch rights, and that ſuch rights do not now exiſt in the nation, either in whole or in part, or any where at all, is of the ſame marvellous and monſtrous kind with what he has already ſaid; for his arguments are, that the perſons, or the generation of perſons, in whom they did exiſt, are dead, and with them the right is dead alſo. To prove this, he quotes a declaration made by parliament about a hundred years ago, to William and Mary, in theſe words: "The lords ſpiritual and temporal, and commons, do, in the name "of the people aforeſaid—(meaning the people of England then "living)—moſt humbly and faithfully *ſubmit* themſelves, their *heirs* "and *poſterity*, for EVER." He alſo quotes a clauſe of another act of parliament made in the ſame reign, the terms of which, he ſays, "bind us—(meaning the people of that day)—our *heirs* and our "*poſterity*, to *them*, their *heirs* and *poſterity*, to the end of time."

Mr. Burke conceives his point ſufficiently eſtabliſhed by producing thoſe clauſes, which he enforces by ſaying that they exclude the right of the nation for *ever*: and not yet content with making ſuch declarations, repeated over and over again, he further ſays, "that if the "people of England poſſeſſed ſuch a right before the revolution,"

(which he acknowledges to have been the caſe, not only in England, but throughout Europe, at an early period) "yet that the *Engliſh* "*nation* did, at the time of the revolution, moſt ſolemnly renounce "and abdicate it, for themſelves, and *for all their poſterity for* "*ever.*"

As Mr. Burke occaſionally applies the poiſon drawn from his horrid principles (if it is not a profanation to call them by the name of principles) not only to the Engliſh nation, but to the French revolution and the national aſſembly, and charges that auguſt, illuminated and illuminating body of men with the epithet of *uſurpers*, I ſhall, *ſans ceremonie*, place another ſyſtem of principles in oppoſition to his.

The Engliſh parliament of 1688 did a certain thing, which for themſelves and their conſtituents, they had a right to do, and which appeared right ſhould be done; but, in addition to this right, which they poſſeſſed by delegation, *they ſet up another right by aſſumption*, that of binding and controlling poſterity to the end of time. The caſe, therefore, divides itſelf into two parts; the right which they poſſeſſed by delegation, and the right which they ſet up by aſſumption. The firſt is admitted; but with reſpect to the ſecond, I reply:—

There never did, there never will, and there never can exiſt a parliament, or any deſcription of men, or any generation of men, in any country, poſſeſſed of the right or the power of binding and controlling poſterity to the "*end of time*," or of commanding for ever how the world ſhall be governed, or who ſhall govern it: And therefore all ſuch clauſes, acts or declarations, by which the makers of them attempt to do what they have neither the right nor the power to do, nor the power to execute, are in themſelves null and void.—Every age and generation muſt be as free to act for itſelf, *in all caſes*, as the ages and generations which preceded it. The vanity and preſumption of governing beyond the grave, is the moſt ridiculous and inſolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man; neither has any generation a property in the generations which are to follow. The parliament or the people of 1688, or of any other period, had no more right to diſpoſe of the people of the preſent day, or to bind or to control them *in any ſhape whatever*, than the parliament or the people of the preſent day have to diſpoſe of, bind or control thoſe who are to live a hundred or a thouſand years hence. Every generation is and muſt be competent to all the purpoſes which its occaſions require. It is the living, and not the dead, that are to be accommodated. When man ceaſes to be, his power and his wants ceaſe with him; and having no longer any participation in the concerns of this world, he

has no longer any authority in directing who ſhall be its governors, or how its government ſhall be organized, or how adminiſtered.

I am not contending for, nor againſt, any form of government, nor for nor againſt any party, here or elſewhere. That which a whole nation chooſes to do, it has a right to do. Mr. Burke ſays, No. Where then does the right exiſt? I am contending for the right of the *living*, and againſt their being willed away, and controlled and contracted for, by the manuſcript aſſumed authority of the dead; and Mr. Burke is contending for the authority of the dead over the rights and freedom of the living. There was a time when kings diſpoſed of their crowns by will upon their death-beds, and conſigned the people, like beaſts of the field, to whatever ſucceſſor they appointed. This is now ſo exploded as ſcarcely to be remembered, and ſo monſtrous as hardly to be believed: But the parliamentary clauſes upon which Mr. Burke builds his political church, are of the ſame nature.

The laws of every country muſt be analogous to ſome common principle. In England, no parent or maſter, nor all the authority of parliament, omnipotent as it has called itſelf, can bind or control the perſonal freedom even of an individual beyond the age of twenty-one years: On what ground of right then could the parliament of 1688, or any other parliament bind all poſterity for ever,

Thoſe who have quitted the world, and thoſe who are not arrived yet at it, are as remote from each other as the utmoſt ſtretch of mortal imagination can conceive: What poſſible obligation then can exiſt between them, what rule or principle can be laid down, that two non-entities, the one out of exiſtence, and the other not in, and who never can meet in this world, that the one ſhould control the other to the end of time.

In England, it is ſaid that money cannot be taken out of the pockets of the people without their conſent: But who authorized, and who could authorize the parliament of 1688 to control and take away the freedom of poſterity, and limit and confine their rights of acting in certain caſes for ever, who were not in exiſtence to give or withhold their conſent?

A greater abſurdity cannot preſent itſelf to the underſtanding of man, than what Mr. Burke offers to his readers. He tells them, and he tells the world to come, that a certain body of men who exiſted an hundred years ago, made a law, and that there does not now exiſt in the nation, nor never will, nor never can, a power to alter it. Under how many ſubtleties, or abſurdities, has the divine right to

govern been impoſed on the credulity of mankind: Mr. Burke has diſcovered a new one, and he has ſhortened his journey to Rome, by appealing to the power of this infallible parliament of former days; and he produces what it has done, as of divine authority: for that power muſt certainly be more than human, which no human power to the end of time can alter.

But Mr. Burke has done ſome ſervice, not to his cauſe, but to his country, by bringing thoſe clauſes into public view. They ſerve to demonſtrate how neceſſary it is at all times to watch againſt the attempted encroachment of power, and to prevent its running to exceſs. It is ſomewhat extraordinary, that the offence for which James II. was expelled, that of ſetting up power by *aſſumption*, ſhould be reacted under another ſhape and form, by the parliament that expelled him. It ſhews, that the rights of man were but imperfectly underſtood at the revolution; for certain it is, that the right which that parliament ſet up by *aſſumption* (for by delegation it had it not, and could not have it, becauſe none could give it) over the perſons and freedom of poſterity for ever, was of the ſame tyrannical unfounded kind which James attempted to ſet up over the parliament and the nation, and for which he was expelled. The only difference is, (for in principle they differ not) that the one was an uſurper over the living, and the other over the unborn; and as the one has no better authority to ſtand upon than the other, both of them muſt be equally null and void, and of no effect.

From what or from whence, does Mr. Burke prove the right of any human power to bind poſterity for ever? He has produced his clauſes; but he muſt produce alſo his proofs, that ſuch a right exiſted, and ſhew how it exiſted. If it ever exiſted, it muſt now exiſt; for whatever appertains to the nature of man, cannot be annihilated by man. It is the nature of man to die, and he will continue to die as long as he continues to be born. But Mr. Burke has ſet up a ſort of political Adam, in whom all poſterity are bound for ever; he muſt therefore prove that his Adam poſſeſſed ſuch a power or ſuch a right.

The weaker any cord is, the leſs will it bear to be ſtretched, and the worſe is the policy to ſtretch it, unleſs it is intended to break it. Had a perſon contemplated the overthrow of Mr. Burke's poſitions, he would have proceeded as Mr. Burke has done. He would have magnified the authorities, on purpoſe to have called the *right* of them into queſtion; and the inſtant the queſtion of right was ſtarted, the authorities muſt have been given up.

It requires but a very ſmall glance of thought to perceive, that

although laws made in one generation often continue in force through ſucceeding generations, yet that they continue to derive their force from the conſent of the living. A law not repealed continues in force, not becauſe it *cannot* be repealed, but becauſe it *is not* repealed; and the non-repealing paſſes for conſent.

But Mr. Burke's clauſes have not even this qualification in their favour. They become null, by attempting to become immortal The nature of them precludes conſent. They deſtroy the right which they *might* have, by grounding it on a right which they *can not* have. Immortal power is not a human right, and therefore cannot be a right of parliament. The parliament of 1688 might as well have paſſed an act to have authoriſed themſelves to live for ever, as to make their authority live for ever. All therefore that can be ſaid of them is, that they are a formality of words, of as much import, as if thoſe who uſed them had addreſſed a congratulation to themſelves, and, in the oriental ſtyle of antiquity, had ſaid, O parliament, live for ever!

The circumſtances of the world are continually changing, and the opinions of men change alſo; and as government is for the living, and not for the dead, it is the living only that has any right in it. That which may be thought right and found convenient in one age, may be thought wrong and found inconvenient in another. In ſuch caſes, who is to decide, the living, or the dead?

As almoſt one hundred pages of Mr. Burke's book are employed upon theſe clauſes, it will conſequently follow, that if the clauſes themſelves, ſo far as they ſet up an *aſſumed*, *uſurped* dominion over poſterity for ever, are unauthoritative, and in their nature null and void, that all his voluminous inferences and declamation drawn therefrom, or founded thereon, are null and void alſo: and on this ground I reſt the matter.

We now come more particularly to the affairs of France. Mr. Burke's book has the appearance of being written as inſtruction to the French nation; but if I may permit myſelf the uſe of an extravagant metaphor, ſuited to the extravagance of the caſe, it is darkneſs attempting to illuminate light.

While I am writing this, there is accidentally before me ſome propoſals for a declaration of rights by the marquis de la Fayette (I aſk his pardon for uſing his former addreſs, and do it only for diſtinction's ſake) to the national aſſembly on the 11th of July 1789, three days before the taking of the Baſtile; and I cannot but be ſtruck how oppoſite the ſources are from which that gentleman and Mr. Burke

draw their principles. Inſtead of referring to muſty records and mouldy parchments, to prove that the rights of the living are loſt, "renounced and abdicated for ever" by thoſe who are now no more, as Mr. Burke has done, M. de la Fayette applies to the living world, and emphatically ſays, "Call to mind the ſentiments which nature "has engraved in the heart of every citizen, and which take a new "force when they are ſolemnly recognized by all:—For a nation to "love liberty, it is ſufficient that ſhe knows it; and to be free, it is "ſufficient that ſhe wills it." How dry, barren, and obſcure, is the ſource from which Mr. Burke labours; and how ineffectual, though gay with flowers, are all his declamation and his argument, compared with theſe clear, conciſe, and ſoul-animating ſentiments: Few and ſhort as they are, they lead on to a vaſt field of generous and manly thinking, and do not finiſh, like Mr. Burke's periods, with muſic in the ear, and nothing in the heart.

As I have introduced the mention of M. de la Fayette, I will take the liberty of adding an anecdote reſpecting his farewel addreſs to the Congreſs of America in 1783, and which occurred freſh to my mind when I ſaw Mr. Burke's thundering attack on the French revolution. —M. de la Fayette went to America at an early period of the war, and continued a volunteer in her ſervice to the end. His conduct through the whole of that enterpriſe is one of the moſt extraordinary that is to be found in the hiſtory of a young man, ſcarcely then twenty years of age. Situated in a country that was like the lap of ſenſual pleaſure, and with the means of enjoying it, how few are there to be found who would exchange ſuch a ſcene for the woods and wilderneſs of America, and paſs the flowery years of youth in unprofitable danger and hardſhip! But ſuch is the fact. When the war ended, and he was on the point of taking his final departure, he preſented himſelf to Congreſs, and contemplating, in his affectionate farewel, the revolution he had ſeen, expreſſed himſelf in theſe words: "*May this "great monument raiſed to Liberty, ſerve as a leſſon to the oppreſſor, and "an example to the oppreſſed!*" When this addreſs came to the hands of Doctor Franklin, who was then in France, he applied to Count Vergennes to have it inſerted in the French gazette, but never could obtain his conſent. The fact was, that Count Vergennes was an ariſtocratical deſpot at home, and dreaded the example of the American revolution in France, as certain other perſons now dread the example of the French revolution in England; and Mr. Burke's tribute of fear (for in this light his book muſt be conſidered) runs parallel with Count Vergennes' refuſal. But, to return more particularly to his work.

"We have ſeen (ſays Mr. Burke) the French rebel againſt a mild "and lawful monarch, with more fury, outrage and inſult, than any "people has been known to riſe againſt the moſt illegal uſurper, or "the moſt ſanguinary tyrant."—This is one among a thouſand other inſtances, in which Mr. Burke ſhews that he is ignorant of the ſprings and principles of the French revolution.

It was not againſt Louis the XVIth, but againſt the deſpotic principles of the government, that the nation revolted. Theſe principles had not their origin in him, but in the original eſtabliſhment, many centuries back; and they were become too deeply rooted to be removed, and the Augean ſtable of paraſites and plunderers too abominably filthy to be cleanſed, by any thing ſhort of a complete and univerſal revolution.

When it becomes neceſſary to do a thing, the whole heart and ſoul ſhould go into the meaſure, or not attempt it. That criſis was then arrived, and there remained no choice but to act with determined vigour, or not to act at all. The king was known to be the friend of the nation, and this circumſtance was favourable to the enterpriſe. Perhaps no man bred up in the ſtyle of an abſolute king, ever poſſeſſed a heart ſo little diſpoſed to the exerciſe of that ſpecies of power as the preſent king of France. But the principles of the government itſelf ſtill remained the ſame. The monarch and the monarchy were diſtinct and ſeparate things; and it was againſt the eſtabliſhed deſpotiſm of the latter, and not againſt the perſon or principles of the former, that the revolt commenced, and the revolution has been carried.

Mr. Burke does not attend to the diſtinction between *men* and *principles*, and therefore he does not ſee that a revolt may take place againſt the deſpotiſm of the latter, while there lies no charge of deſpotiſm againſt the former.

The natural moderation of Louis XVI. contributed nothing to alter the hereditary deſpotiſm of the monarchy. All the tyrannies of former reigns, acted under that hereditary deſpotiſm, were ſtill liable to be revived in the hands of a ſucceſſor. It was not the reſpite of a reign that would ſatisfy France, enlightened as ſhe was then become. A caſual diſcontinuance of the *practice* of deſpotiſm, is not a diſcontinuance of its *principles;* the former depends on the virtue of the individual who is in immediate poſſeſſion of the power; the latter, on the virtue and fortitude of the nation. In the caſe of Charles I. and James II. of England, the revolt was againſt the perſonal deſpotiſm of the men; whereas in France, it was againſt the hereditary deſpot-

iſm of the eſtabliſhed government. But men who can conſign over the rights of poſterity for ever on the authority of a mouldy parchment, like Mr. Burke, are not qualified to judge of this revolution. It takes in a field too vaſt for their views to explore, and proceeds with a mightineſs of reaſon they cannot keep pace with.

But there are many points of view in which this revolution may be conſidered. When deſpotiſm has eſtabliſhed itſelf for ages in a country, as in France, it is not in the perſon of the king only that it reſides. It has the appearance of being ſo in ſhow, and in nominal authority; but it is not ſo in practice, and in fact. It has its ſtandard every where. Every office and department has its deſpotiſm, founded upon cuſtom and uſage. Every place has its Baſtile, and every Baſtile its deſpot. The original hereditary deſpotiſm reſident in the perſon of the king, divides and ſub-divides itſelf into a thouſand ſhapes and forms, till at laſt the whole of it is acted by deputation. This was the caſe in France; and againſt this ſpecies of deſpotiſm, proceeding on through an endleſs labyrinth of office till the ſource of it is ſcarcely perceptible, there is no mode of redreſs. It ſtrengthens itſelf by aſſuming the appearance of duty, and tyranniſes under the pretence of obeying.

When a man reflects on the condition which France was in from the nature of her government, he will ſee other cauſes for revolt than thoſe which immediately connect themſelves with the perſon or character of Louis XVI. There were, if I may ſo expreſs it, a thouſand deſpotiſms to be reformed in France, which had grown up under the hereditary deſpotiſm of the monarchy, and become ſo rooted as to be in a great meaſure independent of it. Between the monarchy, the parliament, and the church, there was a *rivalſhip* of deſpotiſm: Beſides the feudal deſpotiſm operating locally, and the miniſterial deſpotiſm operating every where. But Mr. Burke, by conſidering the king as the only poſſible object of a revolt, ſpeaks as if France was a village, in which every thing that paſſed muſt be known to its commanding officer, and no oppreſſion could be acted but what he could immediately control. Mr. Burke might have been in the Baſtile his whole life, as well under Louis XVI. as Louis XIV. and neither the one nor the other known that ſuch a man as Mr. Burke exiſted. The deſpotic principles of the government were the ſame in both reigns, though the diſpoſitions of the men were as remote as tyranny and benevolence.

What Mr. Burke conſiders as a reproach to the French revolution, that of bringing it forward under a reign more mild than the preced-

ing ones, is one of its higheſt honours. The revolutions that have taken place in other European countries, have been excited by perſonal hatred. The rage was againſt the man, and he became the victim. But, in the inſtance of France, we ſee a revolution generated in the rational contemplation of the rights of man, and diſtinguiſhing from the beginning between perſons and principles.

But Mr. Burke appears to have no idea of principles when he is contemplating governments. "Ten years ago (ſays he) I could "have felicitated France on her having a government, without en- "quiring what the nature of that government was, or how it was "adminiſtered." Is this the language of a rational man? Is it the language of a heart feeling as it ought to feel for the rights and happineſs of the human race? On this ground, Mr. Burke muſt compliment every government in the world, while the victims who ſuffer under them, whether ſold into ſlavery or tortured out of exiſtence, are wholly forgotten. It is power, and not principles that Mr. Burke venerates; and under this abominable depravity, he is diſqualified to judge between them.—Thus much for his opinion as to the occaſions of the French revolution. I now proceed to other conſiderations.

I know a place in America called Point-no-Point; becauſe as you proceed along the ſhore, gay and flowery as Mr. Burke's language, it continually recedes and preſents itſelf at a diſtance a-head; and when you have got as far as you can go, there is no point at all. Juſt thus is it with Mr. Burke's three hundred and fifty-ſix pages. It is therefore difficult to reply to him. But as the points that he wiſhes to eſtabliſh may be inferred from what he abuſes, it is in his paradoxes that we muſt look for his arguments.

As to the tragic paintings by which Mr. Burke has outraged his own imagination, and ſeeks to work upon that of his readers, they are very well calculated for theatrical repreſentation, where facts are manufactured for the ſake of ſhow, and accommodated to produce, thro ugh the weakneſs of ſympathy, a weeping effect. But Mr. Burke ſhould recollect that he is writing hiſtory, and not *plays;* and that his readers will expect truth, and not the ſpouting rant of high-toned exclamation.

When we ſee a man dramatically lamenting in a publication intended to be believed, that "*The age of chivalry is gone;* that *The glory of* "*Europe is extinguiſhed for ever!* that *The unbought grace of life* (if "any one knows what it is,) *the cheap defence of nations, the nurſe of* "*manly ſentiment and heroic enterprize is gone!*" and all this becauſe the Quixotte age of chivalry nonſenſe is gone, what opinion can we

form of his judgment, or what regard can we pay to his facts? In the rhapſody of his imagination, he has diſcovered a world of windmills, and his ſorrows are, that there are no Quixottes to attack them. But if the age of ariſtocracy, like that of chivalry, ſhould fall, and they had originally ſome connection, Mr. Burke, the trumpeter of the order, may continue his parody to the end, and finiſh with exclaiming—"*Othello's occupation's gone!*"

Notwithſtanding Mr. Burke's horrid paintings, when the French revolution is compared with that of other countries, the aſtoniſhment will be, that it is marked with ſo few ſacrifices; but this aſtoniſhment will ceaſe when we reflect that it was *principles*, and not *perſons*, that were the meditated objects of deſtruction. The mind of the nation was acted npon by a higher ſtimulus than what the conſideration of perſons could inſpire, and fought a higher conqueſt than could be produced by the downfal of an enemy. Among the few who fell, there do not appear to be any that were intentionally ſingled out. They all of them had their fate in the circumſtances of the moment, and were not purſued with that long, cold-blooded, unabated revenge which purſued the unfortunate Scotch in the affair of 1745.

Through the whole of Mr. Burke's book I do not obſerve that the Baſtile is mentioned more than once, and that with a kind of implication as if he were ſorry it is pulled down, and wiſhed it were built up again. "We have rebuilt Newgate (ſays he) and tenanted the "manſion; and we have priſons almoſt as ſtrong as the Baſtile for "thoſe who dare to libel the queens of France."* As to what a madman, like the perſon called lord George Gordon, might ſay, and to whom Newgate is rather a bedlam than a priſon, it is unworthy a rational conſideration. It was a madman that libelled—and that is ſufficient apology and it afforded an opportunity for confining him, which was the thing that was wiſhed for: But certain it is that Mr.

* *Since writing the above, two other places occur in Mr. Burke's pamphlet, in which the name of the Baſtile is mentioned, but in the ſame manner.* In the one, *he introduces it in a ſort of obſcure queſtion, and aſks,* —"*Will any miniſters who now ſerve ſuch a king with but a decent appearance of reſpect, cordially obey the orders of thoſe whom but the other day,* in his name, *they had committed to the Baſtile?*" In the other, *the taking it is mentioned as implying criminality in the French guards who aſſiſted in demoliſhing it.*—"*They have not (ſays he) forgot the taking the king's caſtles at Paris.*"—*This is Mr. Burke, who pretends to write on conſtitutional freedom.*

Burke, who does not call himſelf a madman, whatever other people may do, has libelled, in the moſt unprovoked manner, and in the groſſeſt ſtile of the moſt vulgar abuſe, the whole repreſentative authority of France; and yet Mr. Burke takes his ſeat in the Britiſh houſe of commons! From his violence and his grief, his ſilence on ſome points and his exceſs on others, it is difficult not to believe that Mr. Burke is ſorry, extremely ſorry, that arbitrary power, the power of the pope and the Baſtile, are pulled down.

Not one glance of compaſſion, not one commiſerating reflection, that I can find throughout his book has he beſtowed on thoſe that lingered out the moſt wretched of lives, a life without hope, in the moſt miſerable of priſons. It is painful to behold a man employing his talents to corrupt himſelf. Nature has been kinder to Mr. Burke than he has to her. He is not affected by the reality of diſtreſs touching upon his heart, but by the ſhowy reſemblance of it ſtriking his imagination. He pities the plumage, but forgets the dying bird. Accuſtomed to kiſs the ariſtocratical hand that hath purloined him from himſelf, he degenerates into a compoſition of art, and the genuine ſoul of nature forſakes him. His hero or his heroine muſt be a tragedy-victim, expiring in ſhow, and not the real priſoner of miſery, ſliding into death in the ſilence of a dungeon.

As Mr. Burke has paſſed over the whole tranſaction of the Baſtile (and his ſilence is nothing in his favour) and has entertained his readers with reflections on ſuppoſed facts, diſtorted into real falſehoods, I will give, ſince he has not, ſome account of the circumſtances which preceded that tranſaction. They will ſerve to ſhew, that leſs miſchief could ſcarce have accompanied ſuch an event, when conſidered with the treacherous and hoſtile aggravations of the enemies of the revolution.

The mind can hardly picture to itſelf a more tremendous ſcene than what the city of Paris exhibited at the time of taking the Baſtile, and for two days before and after, nor conceive the poſſibility of its quieting ſo ſoon. At a diſtance, this tranſaction has appeared only as an act of heroiſm, ſtanding on itſelf: And the cloſe political connection it had with the revolution is loſt in the brilliancy of the atchievement. But we are to conſider it as the ſtrength of the parties, brought man to man, and contending for the iſſue. The Baſtile was to be either the prize or the priſon of the aſſailants. The downfal of it included the idea of the downfal of deſpotiſm; and this compounded image was become as figuratively united as Bunyan's Doubting Caſtle and giant Deſpair.

The national aſſembly, before and at the time of taking the Baſtile, was ſitting at Verſailles, twelve miles diſtant from Paris. About a week before the riſing of the Pariſians, and their taking the Baſtile, it was diſcovered that a plot was forming, at the head of which was the count d'Artois, the king's youngeſt brother, for demoliſhing the national aſſembly, ſeizing its members, and thereby cruſhing, by a *coup de main*, all hopes and proſpects of forming a free government. For the ſake of humanity, as well as of freedom, it is well this plan did not ſucceed. Examples are not wanting to ſhew how dreadfully vindictive and cruel are all old governments, when they are ſucceſsful againſt what they call a revolt.

This plan muſt have been ſome time in contemplation; becauſe in order to carry it into execution, it was neceſſary to collect a large military force round Paris, and to cut off the communication between that city and the national aſſembly at Verſailles. The troops deſtined for this ſervice were chiefly the foreign troops in the pay of France, and who, for this particular purpoſe, were drawn from the diſtant provinces where they were then ſtationed. When they were collected, to the amount of between twenty-five and thirty thouſand, it was judged time to put the plan in execution. The miniſtry who were then in office, and who were friendly to the revolution, were inſtantly diſmiſſed, and a new miniſtry formed of thoſe which had concerted the project:—among whom was count de Broglio, and to his ſhare was given the command of thoſe troops. The character, of this man, as deſcribed to me in a letter which I communicated to Mr. Burke before he began to write his book, and from an authority which Mr. Burke well knows was good, was that of "an high-"flying ariſtocrat, cool, and capable of every miſchief."

While theſe matters were agitating, the national aſſembly ſtood in the moſt perilous and critical ſituation that a body of men can be ſuppoſed to act in. They were the devoted victims, and they knew it. They had the hearts and wiſhes of their country on their ſide, but military authority they had none. The guards of Broglio ſurrounded the hall where the aſſembly ſat, ready, at the word of command, to ſeize their perſons, as had been done the year before to the parliament in Paris. Had the national aſſembly deſerted their truſt, or had they exhibited ſigns of weakneſs or fear, their enemies had been encouraged, and the country depreſſed. When the ſituation they ſtood in, the cauſe they were engaged in, and the criſis then ready to burſt which ſhould determine their perſonal and political fate, and that of their country, and probably of Europe, are taken

into one view, none but a heart callous with prejudice, or corrupted by dependance, can avoid intereſting itſelf in their ſucceſs.

The archbiſhop of Vienne was at this time preſident of the national aſſembly; a perſon too old to undergo the ſcene that a few days, or a few hours, might bring forth. A man of more activity, and bolder fortitude, was neceſſary; and the national aſſembly choſe (under the form of vice-preſident, for the preſidency ſtill reſided in the archbiſhop) M. de la Fayette; and this is the only inſtance of a vice-preſident being choſen. It was at the moment that this ſtorm was pending (July 11) that a declaration of rights was brought forward by M. de la Fayette, and is the ſame which is alluded to in page 42. It was haſtily drawn up, and makes only a part of a more extenſive declaration of rights, agreed upon and adopted afterwards by the national aſſembly. The particular reaſon for bringing it forward at this moment (M. de la Fayette has ſince informed me) was, that if the national aſſembly ſhould fall in the threatened deſtruction that then ſurrounded it, ſome traces of its principles might have the chance of ſurviving the wreck.

Every thing now was drawing to a criſis. The event was freedom or ſlavery. On one ſide an army of nearly thirty thouſand men; on the other an unarmed body of citizens, for the citizens of Paris on whom the national aſſembly muſt then immediately depend, were as unarmed and as undiſciplined as the citizens of London are now.—The French guards had given ſtrong ſymptons of their being attached to the national cauſe; but their numbers were ſmall, not a tenth part of the force that Broglio commanded, and their officers were in the intereſt of Broglio.

Matters being now ripe for execution, the new miniſtry made their appearance in office. The reader will carry in his mind, that the Baſtile was taken the 14th of July: the point of time I am now ſpeaking to, is the 12th. Immediately on the news of the change of the miniſtry reaching Paris in the afternoon, all the play-houſes and places of entertainment, ſhops and houſes, were ſhut up. The change of miniſtry was conſidered as the prelude of hoſtilities, and the opinion was rightly founded.

The foreign troops began to advance twards the city. The prince de Lambeſc, who commanded a body of German cavalry, approached by the palace of Lewis XV. which connects itſelf with ſome of the ſtreets. In his march he inſulted and ſtruck an old man with his ſword. The French are remarkable for their reſpect to old age, and the inſolence with which it appeared to be done, uniting with the

general fermentation they were in, produced a powerful effect and a cry of *to arms! to arms!* ſpread itſelf in a moment over the whole city.

Arms they had none, nor ſcarcely any who knew the uſe of them; but deſperate reſolution, when every hope is at ſtake, ſupplies, for a while, the want of arms. Near where the prince de Lambeſc was drawn up, were large piles of ſtones collected for building the new bridge, and with theſe the people attacked the cavalry. A party of the French guards, upon hearing the firing, ruſhed from their quarters and joined the people; and night coming on the cavalry retreated.

The ſtreets of Paris, being narrow, are favourable for defence; and the loftineſs of the houſes, conſiſting of many ſtories, from which great annoyance might be given, ſecured them againſt nocturnal enterpriſes; and the night was ſpent in providing themſelves with every ſort of weapon they could make or procure: guns, ſwords, blackſmiths' hammers, carpenters' axes, iron crows, pikes, halberts, pitchforks, ſpits, clubs, &c. &c.

The incredible numbers with which they aſſembled the next morning, and the ſtill more incredible reſolution they exhibited, embarraſſed and aſtoniſhed their enemies. Little did the new miniſtry expect ſuch a ſalute. Accuſtomed to ſlavery themſelves, they had no idea that liberty was capable of ſuch inſpiration, or that a body of unarmed citizens would dare to face the military force of thirty thouſand men. Every moment of this day was employed in collecting arms, concerting plans, and arranging themſelves in the beſt order which ſuch an inſtantaneous movement could afford. Broglio continued lying round the city, but made no farther advances this day, and the ſucceeding night paſſed with as much tranquility as ſuch a ſcene could poſſibly produce.

But defence only was not the object of the citizens. They had a cauſe at ſtake, on which depended their freedom or their ſlavery. They every moment expected an attack, or to hear of one made on the national aſſembly; and in ſuch a ſituation, the moſt prompt meaſures are ſometimes the beſt. The object that now preſented itſelf, was the Baſtile; and the eclat of carrying ſuch a fortreſs in the face of ſuch an army, could not fail to ſtrike a terror into the new miniſtry, who had ſcarcely yet had time to meet. By ſome intercepted correſpondence this morning, it was diſcovered, that the mayor of Paris, M. De Fleſſelles, who appeared to be in their intereſt, was betraying them; and from this diſcovery, there remained no doubt that

Broglio would reinforce the Baſtile the enſuing evening. It was therefore neceſſary to attack it that day; but before this could be done, it was firſt neceſſary to procure a better ſupply of arms than they were then poſſeſſed of.

There was adjoining to the city, a large magazine of arms depoſited at the hoſpital of the invalids, which the citizens ſummoned to ſurrender; and as the place was not defenſible, nor attempted much defence, they ſoon ſucceeded. Thus ſupplied, they marched to attack the Baſtile; a vaſt mixed multitude of all ages, and of all degrees, and armed with all ſorts of weapons. Imagination would fail in deſcribing to itſelf the appearance of ſuch a proceſſion, and of the anxiety for the events which a few hours or a few minutes might produce. What plans the miniſtry was forming, were as unknown to the people within the city, as what the citizens were doing was unknown to them; and what movements Broglio might make for the ſupport or relief of the place, were to the citizens equally as unknown. All was myſtery and hazard.

That the Baſtile was attacked with an enthuſiaſm of heroiſm, ſuch only as the higheſt animation of liberty could inſpire, and carried in the ſpace of a few hours, is an event which the world is fully poſſeſſed of. I am not undertaking a detail of the attack, but bringing into view the conſpiracy againſt the nation which provoked it, and which fell with the Baſtile. The priſon to which the new miniſtry were dooming the national aſſembly, in addition to its being the high altar and caſtle of deſpotiſm, became the proper object to begin with. This enterpriſe broke up the new miniſtry, who began now to fly from the ruin they had prepared for others. The troops of Broglio diſperſed, and himſelf fled alſo.

Mr. Burke has ſpoken a great deal about plots, but he has never once ſpoken of this plot againſt the national aſſembly, and the liberties of the nation; and that he might not, he has paſſed over all the circumſtances that might throw it in his way. The exiles who have fled from France, whoſe cauſe he ſo much intereſts himſelf in, and from whom he has had his leſſon, fled in conſequence of the miſcarriage of this plot. No plot was formed againſt them: It was they who were plotting againſt others; and thoſe who fell, met, not unjuſtly, the puniſhment they were preparing to execute. But will Mr. Burke ſay, that if this plot, contrived with the ſubtlety of an ambuſcade, had ſucceeded, the ſucceſsful party would have reſtrained their wrath ſo ſoon? Let the hiſtory of all old governments anſwer the queſtion.

Whom has the national aſſembly brought to the ſcaffold? None. They were themſelves the devoted victims of this plot, and they have not retaliated; why then are they charged with revenge they have not acted? In the tremendous breaking forth of a whole people, in which all degrees, tempers and characters are confounded, and delivering themſelves, by a miracle of exertion, from the deſtruction meditated againſt them, is it to be expected that nothing will happen? When men are ſore with the ſenſe of oppreſſions, and menaced with the proſpect of new ones, is the calmneſs of philoſophy, or the palſy of inſenſibility to be looked for? Mr. Burke exclaims againſt outrage; yet the greateſt is that which he has committed. His book is a volume of outrage, not apologized for by the impulſe of a moment, but cheriſhed through a ſpace of ten months; yet Mr. Burke had no provocation, no life, no intereſt at ſtake.

More citizens fell in this ſtruggle than of their opponents; but four or five perſons were ſeized by the populace, and inſtantly put to death; the governor of the Baſtile, and the mayor of Paris, who was detected in the act of betraying them; and afterwards Foulon, one of the new miniſtry, and Berthier, his ſon-in-law, who had accepted the office of intendant of Paris. Their heads were ſtuck upon ſpikes, and carried about the city; and it is upon this mode of puniſhment that Mr. Burke builds a great part of his tragic ſcenes. Let us therefore examine how men came by the idea of puniſhing in this manner.

They learn it from the governments they live under; and retaliate the puniſhments they have been accuſtomed to behold. The heads ſtuck upon ſpikes, which remained for years upon Temple-bar, differed nothing in the horror of the ſcene from thoſe carried about on ſpikes at Paris: Yet this was done by the Engliſh government. It may perhaps be ſaid, that it ſignifies nothing to a man what is done to him after he is dead; but it ſignifies much to the living: It either tortures their feelings, or hardens their hearts; and in either caſe, it inſtructs them how to puniſh when power falls into their hands.

Lay then the axe to the root, and teach governments humanity. It is their ſanguinary puniſhments which corrupt mankind. In England, the puniſhment in certain caſes, is by *hanging*, *drawing* and *quartering*; the heart of the ſufferer is cut out, and held up to the view of the populace. In France under the former government, the puniſhments were not leſs barbarous. Who does not remember the execution of Damien, torn to pieces by horſes? The effect of

thoſe cruel ſpectacles exhibited to the populace, is to deſtroy tenderneſs, or excite revenge; and by the baſe and falſe idea of governing men by terror, inſtead of reaſon, they become precedents. It is over the loweſt claſs of mankind that government by terror is intended to operate, and it is on them that it operates to the worſt effect. They have ſenſe enough to feel they are the objects aimed at; and they inflict in their turn the examples of terror they have been inſtructed to practiſe.

There are in all European countries, a large claſs of people of that deſcription which in England are called the "*mob.*" Of this claſs were thoſe who committed the burnings and devaſtations in London in 1780, and of this claſs were thoſe who carried the heads upon ſpikes in Paris. Foulon and Berthier were taken up in the country, and ſent to Paris, to undergo their examination at the Hotel de Ville; for the national aſſembly, immediately on the new miniſtry coming into office, paſſed a decree, which they communicated to the king and cabinet, that they (the national aſſembly) would hold the miniſtry, of which Foulon was one, reſponſible for the meaſures they were adviſing and purſuing; but the mob, incenſed at the appearance of Foulon and Berthier, tore them from their conductors before they were carried to the Hotel de Ville, and executed them on the ſpot. Why then does Mr. Burke charge outrages of this kind on a whole people? As well may he charge the riots and outrages of 1780 on all the people of London, or thoſe in Ireland on all his country.

But every thing we ſee or hear offenſive to our feelings, and derogatory to the human character, ſhould lead to other reflections than thoſe of reproach. Even the beings who commit them have ſome claim to our conſideration. How then is it that ſuch vaſt claſſes of mankind as are diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of the vulgar, or the ignorant mob, are ſo numerous in all old countries? The inſtant we aſk ourſelves this queſtion, reflection feels an anſwer. They ariſe, as an unavoidable conſequence, out of the ill conſtruction of all the old governments in Europe, England included with the reſt. It is by diſtortedly exalting ſome men, that others are diſtortedly debaſed, till the whole is out of nature. A vaſt maſs of mankind are degradedly thrown into the back-ground of the human picture, to bring forward, with greater glare, the puppet ſhew of ſtate and ariſtocracy. In the commencement of a revolution, thoſe men are rather the followers of the *camp* than of the *ſtandard* of liberty, and have yet to be inſtructed how to reverence it.

I give to Mr. Burke all his theatrical exaggerations for facts, and

I then aſk him, if they do not eſtabliſh the certainty of what I here lay down? Admitting them to be true, they ſhew the neceſſity of the French revolution, as much as any one thing he could have aſſerted. Theſe outrages were not the effect of the principles of the revolution, but of the degraded mind that exiſted before the revolution, and which the revolution is calculated to reform. Place them then to their proper cauſe, and take the reproach of them to your own ſide.

It is to the honour of the national aſſembly, and the city of Paris, that during ſuch a tremendous ſcene of arms and confuſion, beyond the control of all authority, that they have been able, by the influence of example and exhortation, to reſtrain ſo much. Never were more pains taken to inſtruct and enlighten mankind, and to make them ſee that their intereſt conſiſted in their virtue, and not in their revenge, than what have been diſplayed in the revolution of France.—I now proceed to make ſome remarks on Mr Burke's account of the expedition to Verſailles, October 5th and 6th.

I cannot conſider Mr. Burke's book in ſcarcely any other light than a dramatic performance; and he muſt, I think, have conſidered it in the ſame light himſelf, by the poetical liberties he has taken of omitting ſome facts, diſtorting others, and making the whole machinery bend to produce a ſtage effect. Of this kind is his account of the expedition to Verſailles. He begins this account by omitting the only facts which as cauſes are known to be true; every thing beyond theſe is conjecture even in Paris: and he then works up a tale accommodated to his own paſſions and prejudices.

It is to be obſerved throughout Mr. Burke's book, that he never ſpeaks of plots *againſt* the revolution; and it is from thoſe plots that all the miſchiefs have ariſen. It ſuits his purpoſe to exhibit the conſequences without their cauſes. It is one of the arts of the drama to do ſo. If the crimes of men were exhibited with their ſuffering, the ſtage effect would ſometimes be loſt, and the audience would be inclined to approve where it was intended they ſhould commiſerate.

After all the inveſtigations that have been made into this intricate affair (the expedition to Verſailles), it ſtill remains enveloped in all that kind of myſtery which ever accompanies events produced more from a concurrence of aukward circumſtances, than from fixed deſign. While the characters of men are forming, as is always the caſe in revolutions, there is a reciprocal ſuſpicion, and a diſpoſition to miſinterpret each other; and even parties directly oppoſite in principle, will ſometimes concur in puſhing forward the ſame movement with

very different views, and with the hopes of its producing very different conſequences. A great deal of this may be diſcovered in this embarraſſed affair, and yet the iſſue of the whole was what nobody had in view.

The only things certainly known are, that conſiderable uneaſineſs was at this time excited at Paris, by the delay of the king in not ſanctioning and forwarding the decrees of the national aſſembly, particularly that of the *declaration of the rights of man*, and the decrees of the *fourth of Auguſt*, which contained the foundation principles on which the conſtitution was to be erected. The kindeſt, and perhaps the faireſt, conjecture upon this matter is, that ſome of the miniſters intended to make remarks and obſervations upon certain parts of them, before they were finally ſanctioned and ſent to the provinces; but be this as it may, the enemies of the revolution derived hopes from the delay, and the friends of the revolution, uneaſineſs.

During this ſtate of ſuſpence, the *gardes du corps*, which was compoſed, as ſuch regiments generally are, of perſons much connected with the court, gave an entertainment at Verſailles (Oct. 1,) to ſome foreign regiments then arrived; and when the entertainment was at the height, on a ſignal given, the *gardes du corps* tore the national cockade from their hats, trampled it under foot, and replaced it with a counter cockade prepared for the purpoſe. An indignity of this kind amounted to defiance. It was like declaring war; and if men will give challenges, they muſt expect conſequences. But all this Mr. Burke has carefully kept out of ſight. He begins his account by ſaying, "Hiſtory will record, that on the morning of the 6th of "October 1789, the king and queen of France, after a day of con- "fuſion, alarm, diſmay, and ſlaughter, lay down under the pledged "ſecurity of public faith, to indulge nature in a few hours of reſpite, "and troubled melancholy repoſe." This is neither the ſober ſtyle of hiſtory, nor the intention of it. It leaves every thing to be gueſſed at, and miſtaken. One would at leaſt think there had been a battle; and a battle there probably would have been, had it not been for the moderating prudence of thoſe whom Mr. Burke involves in his cenſures. By his keeping the *gardes du corps* out of ſight, Mr. Burke has afforded himſelf the dramatic licence of putting the king and queen in their places, as if the object of the expedition was againſt them.—But, to return to my account—

This conduct of the *gardes du corps*, as might well be expected, alarmed and enraged the Pariſians, The colours of the cauſe, and the cauſe itſelf, were become too united to miſtake the intention of the

inſult, and the Pariſians were determined to call the *gardes du corps* to an account. There was certainly nothing of the cowardice of aſſaſſination in marching in the face of day to demand ſatisfaction, if ſuch a phraſe may be uſed, of a body of armed men who had voluntarily given defiance. But the circumſtance which ſerves to throw this affair into embarraſſment is, that the enemies of the revolution appear to have encouraged it, as well as its friends. The one hoped to prevent a civil war by checking it in time, and the other to make one. The hopes of thoſe oppoſed to the revolution, reſted in making the king of their party, and getting him from Verſailles to Metz, where they expected to collect a force, and ſet up a ſtandard. We have therefore two different objects preſenting themſelves at the ſame time, and to be accompliſhed by the ſame means: the one, to chaſtiſe the *gardes du corps*, which was the object of the Pariſians; the other, to render the confuſion of ſuch a ſcene an inducement to the king to ſet off for Metz.

On the 5th of October, a very numerous body of women, and men in the diſguiſe of women, collected round the Hotel de Ville or town-hall at Paris, and ſet off for Verſailles. Their profeſſed object was the *gardes du corps*; but prudent men readily recollected that miſchief is eaſier begun than ended; and this impreſſed itſelf with the more force, from the ſuſpicions already ſtated, and the irregularity of ſuch a cavalcade. As ſoon therefore as a ſufficient force could be collected M. de la Fayette, by orders from the civil authority of Paris, ſet off after them at the head of twenty thouſand of the Paris militia. The revolution could derive no benefit from confuſion, and its oppoſers might. By an amiable and ſpirited manner of addreſs, he had hitherto been fortunate in calming diſquietudes, and in this he was extraordinarily ſucceſsful; to fruſtrate, therefore, the hopes of thoſe who might ſeek to improve this ſcene into a ſort of juſtifiable neceſſity for the king's quitting Verſailles and withdrawing to Metz, and to prevent at the ſame time, the conſequences that might enſue between the *gardes du corps* and this phalanx of men and women, he forwarded expreſſes to the king, that he was on his march to Verſailles, at the orders of the civil authority of Paris, for the purpoſe of peace and protection, expreſſing at the ſame time, the neceſſity of reſtraining the *gardes du corps* from firing on the people.*

* *I am warranted in aſſerting this, as I had it from M. de la Fayette, with whom I have lived in habits of friendſhip for fourteen years.*

He arrived at Verſailles between ten and eleven at night. The *gardes du corps* was drawn up, and the people had arrived ſome time before, but every thing had remained ſuſpended. Wiſdom and policy now conſiſted in changing a ſcene of danger into a happy event. M. de la Fayette became the mediator between the enraged parties; and the king, to remove the uneaſineſs which had ariſen from the delay already ſtated, ſent for the preſident of the national aſſembly, and ſigned the *declaration of the rights of man*, and ſuch other parts of the conſtitution as were in readineſs.

It was now about one in the morning. Every thing appeared to be compoſed, and a general congratulation took place. At the beat of drum a proclamation was made, that the citizens of Verſailles would give the hoſpitality of their houſes to their fellow-citizens of Paris. Thoſe who could not be accommodated in this manner, remained in the ſtreets, or took up their quarters in the churches; and at two o'clock the king and queen retired.

In this ſtate matters paſſed till the break of day, when a freſh diſturbance aroſe from the cenſurable conduct of ſome of both parties, for ſuch characters there will be in all ſuch ſcenes. One of the *gardes du corps* appeared at one of the windows of the palace, and the people who had remained during the night in the ſtreets accoſted him with reviling and provocative language. Inſtead of retiring, as in ſuch a caſe prudence would have dictated, he preſented his muſket, fired, and killed one of the Paris militia. The peace being thus broken, the people ruſhed into the palace in queſt of the offender. They attacked the quarters of the *gardes du corps* within the palace, and purſued them through the avenues of it, and to the apartments of the king. On this tumult, not the queen only, as Mr. Burke has repreſented it, but every perſon in the palace, was awakened and alarmed; and M de la Fayette had a ſecond time to interpoſe between the parties, the event of which was, that the *gardes du corps* put on the national cockade, and the matter ended, as by oblivion, after the loſs of two or three lives.

During the latter part of the time in which this confuſion was acting, the king and queen were in public at the balcony, and neither of them concealed for ſafety's ſake, as Mr. Burke inſinuates. Matters being thus appeaſed, and tranquility reſtored, a general acclamation broke forth, of *Le roi à Paris—Le roi à Paris*—The king to Paris. It was the ſhout of peace, and immediately accepted on the part of the king. By this meaſure, all future projects of trepanning the king to Metz, and ſetting up the ſtandard of oppoſition to the

conſtitution, were prevented, and the ſuſpicions extinguiſhed. The king and his family reached Paris in the evening, and were congratulated on their arrival by M. Bailley, the mayor of Paris, in the name of the citizens. Mr. Burke, who throughout his book confounds things, perſons, and principles, has in his remarks on M. Bailley's addreſs, confounded time alſo. He cenſures M. Bailley for calling it, "*un bon jour*," a good day. Mr. Burke ſhould have informed himſelf, that this ſcene took up the ſpace of two days, the day on which it began with every appearance of danger and miſchief, and the day on which it terminated without the miſchiefs that threatened; and that it is to this peaceful termination that M. Bailley alludes, and to the arrival of the king at Paris. Not leſs than three hundred thouſand perſons arranged themſelves in the proceſſion from Verſailles to Paris, and not an act of moleſtation was committed during the whole march.

Mr. Burke, on the authority of M. Lally Tollendal, a deſerter from the national aſſembly, ſays, that on entering Paris, the people ſhouted, "*Tous les évéques á la lanterne.*" All biſhops to be hanged at the lanthorn or lamp-poſts.—It is ſurpriſing that nobody ſhould hear this but Lally Tollendal, and that nobody ſhould believe it but Mr. Burke. It has not the the leaſt connection with any part of the tranſaction, and is totally foreign to every circumſtance of it. The biſhops have never been introduced before into any ſcene of Mr. Burke's drama: Why then are they, all at once, and together, *tout á coup et tous enſemble*, introduced now? Mr. Burke brings forward his biſhops and his lanthorn, like figures in a magic lanthorn, and raiſes his ſcenes by contraſt inſtead of connection. But it ſerves to ſhew, with the reſt of his book, what little credit ought to be given, where even probability is ſet at defiance, for the purpoſe of defaming; and with this reflection, inſtead of a ſoliloquy in praiſe of chivalry, as Mr. Burke has done, I cloſe the account of the expedition to Verſailles.*

I have now to follow Mr. Burke through a pathleſs wilderneſs of rhapſodies, and a ſort of deſcant upon governments, in which he aſſerts whatever he pleaſes, on the preſumption of its being believed, without offering either evidence or reaſons for ſo doing.

Before any thing can be reaſoned upon to a concluſion, certain facts,

* *An account of the expedition to Verſailles may be ſeen in No.* 13, *of the* REVOLUTION DE PARIS, *containing the events from the* 3*d to the* 10*th of October*, 1789.

principles, or data, to reaſon from, muſt be eſtabliſhed, admitted, or denied. Mr. Burke, with his uſual outrage, abuſes the *declaration of the rights of man*, publiſhed by the national aſſembly of France, as the baſis on which the conſtitution of France is built. This he calls "paltry and blurred ſheets of paper about the rights of man."—Does Mr. Burke mean to deny that *man* has any rights? If he does, then he muſt mean that there are no ſuch things as rights any where, and that he has none himſelf; for who is there in the world but man? But if Mr. Burke means to admit that man has rights, the queſtion then will be, what are thoſe rights, and how came man by them originally?

The error of thoſe who reaſon by precedents drawn from antiquity, reſpecting the rights of man, is, that they do not go far enough into antiquity. They do not go the whole way. They ſtop in ſome of the intermediate ſtages of an hundred or a thouſand years, and produce what was then done as a rule for the preſent day. This is no authority at all. If we travel ſtill farther into antiquity, we will find a direct contrary opinion and practice prevailing; and if antiquity is to be authority, a thouſand ſuch authorities may be produced, ſucceſſively contradicting each other: But if we proceed on, we ſhall at laſt come out right; we ſhall come to the time when man came from the hand of his maker. What was he then? Man. Man was his high and only title, and a higher cannot be given him.—But of titles I ſhall ſpeak hereafter.

We are now got at the origin of man, and at the origin of his rights. As to the manner in which the world has been governed from that day to this, it is no farther any concern of ours than to make a proper uſe of the errors or the improvements which the hiſtory of it preſents. Thoſe who lived an hundred or a thouſand years ago, were then moderns as we are now. They had *their* ancients and thoſe ancients had others, and we alſo ſhall be ancients in our turn. If the mere name of antiquity is to govern in the affairs of life, the people who are to live an hundred or a thouſand years hence, may as well take us for a precedent, as we make a precedent of thoſe who lived an hundred or a thouſand years ago. The fact is, that portions of antiquity, by proving every thing, eſtabliſh nothing. It is authority againſt authority all the way, till we come to the divine origin of the rights of man, at the creation. Here our enquiries find a reſting-place, and our reaſon finds a home. If a diſpute about the rights of man had aroſe at the diſtance of an hundred years from the creation, it is to this ſource of authority they muſt have referred, and it is to the ſame ſource of authority that we muſt now refer.

Though I mean not to touch upon any ſectarian principle of religion, yet it may be worth obſerving, that the genealogy of Chriſt is traced to Adam. Why then not trace the rights of man to the creation of man? I will anſwer the queſtion. Becauſe there have been an upſtart of governments, thruſting themſelves between, and preſumptuouſly working to *un-make* man.

If any generation of men ever poſſeſſed the right of dictating the mode by which the world ſhould be governed for ever, it was the firſt generation that exiſted; and if that generation did not do it, no ſucceeding generation can ſhew any authority for doing it, nor ſet any up. The illuminating and divine principles of the equal rights of man (for it has its origin from the maker of man,) relates, not only to the living individuals, but to generations of men ſucceeding each other. Every generation is equal in rights to the generations which preceded it, by the ſame rule that every individual is born equal in rights with his cotemporary.

Every hiſtory of the creation, and every traditionary account, whether from the lettered or unlettered world, however they may vary in their opinion or belief of certain particulars, all agree in eſtabliſhing one point, *the unity of man;* by which I mean that man is all of *one degree*, and conſequently that all men are born equal, and with equal natural rights, in the ſame manner as if poſterity had been continued by *creation* inſtead of *generation*, the latter being only the mode by which the former is carried forward; and conſequently, every child born into the world muſt be conſidered as deriving its exiſtence from God. The world is as new to him as it was to the firſt man that exiſted, and his natural right in it is of the ſame kind.

The Moſaic account of the creation, whether taken as divine authority, or merely hiſtorical, is fully up to this point, *the unity or equality of man*. The expreſſions admit of no controverſy. "And God "ſaid, Let us make man in our own image. In the image of God "created he him; male and female created he them." The diſtinction of ſexes is pointed out, but no other diſtinction is even implied. If this be not divine authority, it is at leaſt hiſtorical authority, and ſhews that the equality of man, ſo far from being a modern doctrine, is the oldeſt upon record.

It is alſo to be obſerved, that all the religions known in the world are founded, ſo far as they relate to man, on the *unity of man*, as being all of one degree. Whether in heaven or in hell, or in whatever ſtate man may be ſuppoſed to exiſt hereafter, the good and the bad are the only diſtinctions. Nay, even the laws of governments are

obliged to ſlide into this principle, by making degrees to conſiſt in crimes, and not in perſons.

It is one of the greateſt of all truths, and of the higheſt advantage to cultivate. By conſidering man in this light, and by inſtructing him to conſider himſelf in this light, it places him in a cloſe connection with all his duties, whether to his creator, or to the creation, of which he is a part; and it is only when he forgets his origin, or, to uſe a more faſhionable phraſe, his *birth and family*, that he becomes diſſolute. It is not among the leaſt of the evils of the preſent exiſting governments in all parts of Europe, that man, conſidered as man, is thrown back to a vaſt diſtance from his maker, and the artificial chaſm filled up by a ſucceſſion of barriers, or a ſort of turnpike gates, through which he has to paſs. I will quote Mr. Burke's catalogue of barriers that he has ſet up between man and his maker. Putting himſelf in the character of a herald, he ſays—"We fear God—we "look with *awe* to kings—with affection to parliaments—with "duty to magiſtrates—with reverence to prieſts, and with reſpect to "nobility." Mr. Burke has forgot to put in "*chivalry*." He has alſo forgot to put in Peter.

The duty of man is not a wilderneſs of turnpike gates, through which he is to paſs by tickets from one to the other. It is plain and ſimple, and conſiſts but of two points. His duty to God, which every man muſt feel; and with reſpect to his neighbour, to do as he would be done by. If thoſe to whom power is delegated do well, they will be reſpected; if not, they will be deſpiſed; and with regard to thoſe to whom no power is delegated, but who aſſume it, the rational world can know nothing of them.

Hitherto we have ſpoken only (and that but in part) of the natural rights of man. We have now to conſider the civil rights of man, and to ſhew how the one originates out of the other. Man did not enter into ſociety to become *worſe* than he was before, nor to have leſs rights than he had before, but to have thoſe rights better ſecured. His natural rights are the foundation of all his civil rights. But in order to purſue this diſtinction with more preciſion, it will be neceſſary to mark the different qualities of natural and civil rights.

A few words will explain this. Natural rights are thoſe which appertain to man in right of his exiſtence. Of this kind are all the intellectual rights, or rights of the mind, and alſo all thoſe rights of acting as an individual for his own comfort and happineſs, which are not injurious to the natural rights of others.—Civil rights are

thoſe which appertain to man in right of his being a member of ſociety. Every civil right has for its foundation ſome natural right pre-exiſting in the individual, but to which his individual power is not, in all caſes, ſufficiently competent. Of this kind are all thoſe which relate to ſecurity and protection.

From this ſhort review, it will be eaſy to diſtinguiſh between that claſs of natural rights which man retains after entering into ſociety, and thoſe which he throws into common ſtock as a member of ſociety.

The natural rights which he retains, are all thoſe in which the *power* to execute is as perfect in the individual as the right itſelf. Among this claſs, as is before mentioned, are all the intellectual rights, or rights of the mind: Conſequently, religion is one of thoſe rights. The natural rights which are not retained, are all thoſe in which, though the right is perfect in the individual, the power to execute them is defective. They anſwer not his purpoſe. A man, by natural right, has a right to judge in his own cauſe; and ſo far as the right of the mind is concerned, he never ſurrenders it: But what availeth it him to judge, if he has not power to redreſs? He therefore depoſits this right in the common ſtock of ſociety, and takes the arm of ſociety, of which he is a part, in preference and in addition to his own. Society *grants* him nothing. Every man is a proprietor in ſociety, and draws on the capital as a matter of right.

From theſe premiſes, two or three certain concluſions will follow.

Firſt, That every civil right grows out of a natural right; or, in other words, is a natural right exchanged.

Secondly, That civil power, properly conſidered as ſuch, is made up of the aggregate of that claſs of the natural rights of man, which becomes defective in the individual in point of power, and anſwers not his purpoſe, but when collected to a focus, becomes competent to the purpoſe of every one.

Thirdly, That the power produced from the aggregate of natural rights, imperfect in power in the individual, cannot be applied to invade the natural rights which are retained in the individual, and in which the power to execute is as perfect as the right itſelf.

We have now, in a few words, traced man from a natural individual to a member of ſociety, and ſhewn, or endeavoured to ſhew, the quality of the natural rights retained, and of thoſe which are exchanged for civil rights. Let us now apply thoſe principles to government.

In caſting our eyes over the world, it is extremely eaſy to diſtin-

guiſh the governments which have ariſen out of ſociety, or out of the ſocial compact, from thoſe which have not: But to place this in a clearer light than what a ſingle glance may afford, it will be proper to take a review of the ſeveral ſources from which governments have ariſen, and on which they have been founded.

They may be all comprehended under three heads. 1ſt, Superſtition. 2dly, Power. 3dly, The common intereſts of ſociety, and the common rights of man.

The firſt was a government of prieſt-craft, the ſecond of conquerors, and the third of reaſon.

When a ſet of artful men pretended, through the medium of oracles, to hold intercourſe with the Deity, as familiarly as they now march up the back-ſtairs in European courts, the world was completely under the government of ſuperſtition. The oracles were conſulted, and whatever they were made to ſay, became the law; and this ſort of government laſted as long as this ſort of ſuperſtition laſted.

After theſe a race of conquerors aroſe, whoſe government, like that of William the conqueror, was founded in power, and the ſword aſſumed the name of a ſceptre. Governments thus eſtabliſhed, laſt as long as the power to ſupport them laſts; but that they might avail themſelves of every engine in their favour, they united fraud to force, and ſet up an idol which they called *divine right*, and which, in imitation of the pope, who affects to be ſpiritual and temporal, and in contradiction to the founder of the Chriſtian religion, twiſted itſelf afterwards into an idol of another ſhape, called *church and ſtate*. The key of St. Peter, and the key of the treaſury, became quartered on one another, and the wondering cheated multitude worſhipped the invention.

When I contemplate the natural dignity of man; when I feel (for nature has not been kind enough to me to blunt my feelings) for the honour and happineſs of its character, I become irritated at the attempt to govern mankind by force and fraud, as if they were all knaves and fools, and can ſcarcely avoid diſguſt at thoſe who are thus impoſed upon.

We have now to review the governments which ariſe out of ſociety, in contradiſtinction to thoſe which aroſe out of ſuperſtition and conqueſt.

It has been thought a conſiderable advance towards eſtabliſhing the principles of freedom, to ſay, that government is a compact between thoſe who govern and thoſe who are governed: But this

cannot be true, becauſe it is putting the effect before the cauſe; for as man muſt have exiſted before governments exiſted, there neceſſarily was a time when governments did not exiſt, and conſequently there could originally exiſt no governors to form ſuch a compact with. The fact therefore muſt be, that the *individuals themſelves*, each in his own perſonal and ſovereign right, *entered into a compact with each other* to produce a government: And this is the only mode in which governments have a right to ariſe, and the only principle on which they have a right to exiſt.

To poſſeſs ourſelves of a clear idea of what government is or ought to be, we muſt trace it to its origin. In doing this, we ſhall eaſily diſcover that governments muſt have ariſen, either *out* of the people, or *over* the people. Mr. Burke has made no diſtinction. He inveſtigates nothing to its ſource, and therefore he confounds every thing: But he has ſignified his intention of undertaking at ſome future opportunity, a compariſon between the conſtitutions of England and France. As he thus renders it a ſubject of controverſy by throwing the gauntlet, I take him up on his own ground. It is in high challenges that high truths have the right of appearing; and I accept it with the more readineſs, becauſe it affords me, at the ſame time, an opportunity of purſuing the ſubject with reſpect to governments ariſing out of ſociety.

But it will be firſt neceſſary to define what is meant by a *conſtitution*. It is not ſufficient that we adopt the word; we muſt fix alſo a ſtandard-ſignification to it.

A conſtitution is not a thing in name only, but in fact. It has not an ideal, but a real exiſtence; and wherever it cannot be produced in a viſible form, there is none. A conſtitution is a thing *antecedent* to a government, and a government is only the creature of a conſtitution. The conſtitution of a country is not the act of its government, but of the people conſtituting a government. It is the body of elements, to which you can refer, and quote article by article; and which contains the principles on which the government ſhall be eſtabliſhed, the manner in which it ſhall be organized, the powers it ſhall have, the mode of elections, the duration of parliaments, or by what other name ſuch bodies may be called; the powers which the executive part of the government ſhall have; and, in fine, every thing that relates to the complete organization of a civil government, and the principles on which it ſhall act, and by which it ſhall be bound. A conſtitution, therefore, is to a government, what the laws made afterwards by that government are to a court of judicature. The

court of judicature does not make laws, neither can it alter them; it only acts in conformity to the laws made; and the government is in like manner governed by the conſtitution.

Can then Mr. Burke produce the Engliſh conſtitution? If he cannot we may fairly conclude, that though it has been ſo much talked about, no ſuch thing as a conſtitution exiſts, or ever did exiſt, and conſequently that the people have yet a conſtitution to form.

Mr. Burke will not, I preſume, deny the poſition I have already advanced; namely, that governments ariſe either *out* of the people, or *over* the people. The Engliſh government is one of thoſe which aroſe out of a conqueſt, and not out of ſociety, and conſequently it aroſe over the people; and though it has been much modified from the opportunity of circumſtances ſince the time of William the conqueror, the country has never yet regenerated itſelf, and is therefore without a conſtitution.

I readily perceive the reaſon why Mr. Burke declined going into the compariſon between the Engliſh and French conſtitutions, becauſe he could not but perceive, when he ſat down to the taſk, that no ſuch thing as a conſtitution exiſted on his ſide the queſtion. His book is certainly bulky enough to have contained all he could ſay on this ſubject, and it would have been the beſt manner in which people could have judged of their ſeparate merits. Why then has he declined the only thing that was worth while to write upon? It was the ſtrongeſt ground he could take, if the advantages were on his ſide; but the weakeſt if they were not; and his declining to take it, is either a ſign that he could not poſſeſs it, or could not maintain it.

Mr. Burke has ſaid, in a ſpeech laſt winter in parliament, that when the national aſſembly firſt met in three orders (the tiers etats, the clergy, and the nobleſſe), that France had then a good conſtitution. This ſhews, among numerous other inſtances, that Mr. Burke does not underſtand what a conſtitution is. The perſons ſo met, were not a *conſtitution*, but a *convention* to make a conſtitution.

The preſent national aſſembly of France is, ſtrictly ſpeaking, the perſonal ſocial compact. The members of it are the delegates of the nation in its *original* character; future aſſemblies will be the delegates of the nation in its *organized* character. The authority of the preſent aſſembly is different to what the authority of future aſſemblies will be. The authority of the preſent one is to form a conſtitution: the authority of future aſſemblies will be to legiſlate according to the principles and forms preſcribed in that conſtitution; and if experience ſhould hereafter ſhew that alterations, amendments, or additions are

neceſſary, the conſtitution will point out the mode by which ſuch things ſhall be done, and not leave it to the diſcretionary power of the future government.

A government on the principles on which conſtitutional governments, ariſing out of ſociety, are eſtabliſhed, cannot have the right of altering itſelf. If it had, it would be arbitrary. It might make itſelf what it pleaſed; and wherever ſuch a right is ſet up, it ſhews there is no conſtitution. The act by which the Engliſh parliament empowered itſelf to ſit ſeven years, ſhews there is no conſtitution in England. It might, by the ſame ſelf-authority, have ſat any greater number of years, or for life. The bill which the preſent Mr. Pitt brought into parliament ſome years ago, to reform parliament, was on the ſame erroneous principle. The right of reform is in the nation in its original character, and the conſtitutional method would be by a general convention elected for the purpoſe. There is moreover a paradox in the idea of vitiated bodies reforming themſelves.

From theſe preliminaries I proceed to draw ſome compariſons. I have already ſpoken of the declaration of rights; and as I mean to be as conciſe as poſſible, I ſhall proceed to other parts of the French conſtitution.

The conſtitution of France ſays, that every man who pays a tax of ſixty ſous *per annum* (2s. and 6d. Engliſh), is an elector. What article will Mr. Burke place againſt this? Can any thing be more limited, and at the ſame time more capricious, than what the qualifications of electors are in England? Limited—becauſe not one man in an hundred (I ſpeak much within compaſs) is admitted to vote: Capricious—becauſe the loweſt character that can be ſuppoſed to exiſt, and who has not ſo much as the viſible means of an honeſt livelihood, is an elector in ſome places; while, in other places, the man who pays very large taxes, and with a fair known character, and the farmer who rents to the amount of three or four hundred pounds a year, and with a property on that farm to three or four times that amount, is not admitted to be an elector. Every thing is out of nature, as Mr. Burke ſays on another occaſion, in this ſtrange chaos, and all ſorts of follies are blended with all ſorts of crimes. William the conqueror and his deſcendants parcelled out the country in this manner, and bribed one part of it by what they called charters, to hold the other parts of it the better ſubjected to their will. This is the reaſon why ſo many of thoſe charters abound in Cornwall. The people were averſe to the government eſtabliſhed at the conqueſt, and the towns were garriſoned and bribed to enſlave the country. All

the old charters are the badges of this conqueſt, and it is from this ſource that the capriciouſneſs of election ariſes.

The French conſtitution ſays, that the number of repreſentatives for any place ſhall be in a ratio to the number of taxable inhabitants or electors. What article will Mr. Burke place againſt this? The county of Yorkſhire, which contains near a million of ſouls, ſends two county members; and ſo does the county of Rutland, which contains not an hundredth part of that number. The town of Old Sarum, which contains not three houſes, ſends two members; and the town of Mancheſter, which contains upwards of ſixty thouſand ſouls, is not admitted to ſend any. Is there any principle in theſe things? Is there any thing by which you can trace the marks of freedom, or diſcover thoſe of wiſdom? No wonder then Mr. Burke has declined the compariſon, and endeavoured to lead his readers from the point by a wild unſyſtematical diſplay of paradoxical rhapſodies.

The French conſtitution ſays, that the national aſſembly ſhall be elected every two years. What article will Mr. Burke place againſt this? Why, that the nation has no right at all in the caſe: that the government is perfectly arbitrary with reſpect to this point; and he can quote for his authority, the precedent of a former parliament.

The French conſtitution ſays, there ſhall be no game laws; that the farmer on whoſe lands wild game ſhall be found (for it is by the produce of thoſe lands they are fed) ſhall have a right to what he can take. That there ſhall be no monopolies of any kind—that all trades ſhall be free, and every man free to follow any occupation by which he can procure an honeſt livelihood, and in any place, town or city throughout the nation. What will Mr. Burke ſay to this? In England, game is made the property of thoſe at whoſe expence it is not fed; and with reſpect to monopolies, the country is cut up into monopolies. Every chartered town is an ariſtocratical monopoly in itſelf, and the qualification of electors proceeds out of thoſe chartered monopolies. Is this freedom? Is this what Mr. Burke means by a conſtitution.

In theſe chartered monopolies, a man coming from another part of the country, is hunted from them as if he were a foreign enemy. An Engliſhman is not free of his own country: every one of thoſe places preſents a barrier in his way, and tells him he is not a freeman —that he has no rights. Within theſe monopolies, are other monopolies. In a city, ſuch for inſtance as Bath, which contains between twenty and thirty thouſand inhabitants, the right of electing repre-

ſentatives to parliament is monopoliſed into about thirty-one perſons. And within theſe monopolies are ſtill others. A man even of the ſame town, whoſe parents were not in circumſtances to give him an occupation is debarred, in many caſes, from the natural right of acquiring one, be his genius or induſtry what it may.

Are theſe things examples to hold out to a country regenerating itſelf from ſlavery, like France?—Certainly they are not; and certain am I, that when the people of England come to reflect upon them, they will, like France, annihilate thoſe badges of ancient oppreſſion, thoſe traces of a conquered nation.—Had Mr. Burke poſſeſſed talents ſimilar to the author "On the Wealth of Nations," he would have comprehended all the parts which enter into, and, by aſſemblage, form a conſtitution. He would have reaſoned from minutiæ to magnitude. It is not from his prejudices only, but from the diſorderly caſt of his genius, that he is unfitted for the ſubject he writes upon. Even his genius is without a conſtitution. It is a genius at random, and not a genius conſtituted. But he muſt ſay ſomething—He has therefore mounted in the air like a balloon, to draw the eyes of the multitude from the ground they ſtand upon.

Much is to be learned from the French conſtitution. Conqueſt and tyranny tranſplanted themſelves with William the conqueror from Normandy into England, and the country is yet diſfigured with the marks. May then the example of all France contribute to regenerate the freedom which a province of it deſtroyed!

The French conſtitution ſays, That to preſerve the national repreſentation from being corrupt, no member of the national aſſembly ſhall be an officer of the government, a place-man, or a penſioner.—What will Mr. Burke place againſt this? I will whiſper his anſwer: *Loaves* and *fiſhes*. Ah! this government of loaves and fiſhes has more miſchief in it than people have yet reflected on. The national aſſembly has made the diſcovery, and it holds out the example to the world. Had governments agreed to quarrel on purpoſe to fleece their countries by taxes, they could not have ſucceeded better than they have done.

Every thing in the Engliſh government appears to me the reverſe of what it ought to be, and of what it is ſaid to be. The parliament, imperfectly and capriciouſly elected as it is, is nevertheleſs *ſuppoſed* to hold the national purſe in *truſt* for the nation: But in the manner in which an Engliſh parliament is conſtructed, it is like a man being both mortgager and mortgagee; and in the caſe of miſapplication of truſt, it is the criminal ſitting in judgment upon himſelf. If thoſe

who vote the ſupplies are the ſame perſons who receive the ſupplies when voted, and are to account for the expenditure of thoſe ſupplies to thoſe who voted them, it is *themſelves accountable to themſelves*, and the Comedy of Errors concludes with the pantomime of *Huſh*. Neither the miniſterial party, nor the oppoſition, will touch upon this caſe. The national purſe is the common hack which each mounts upon. It is like what the country people call, "Ride and tie—You ride a little way, and then I."*—They order theſe things better in France.

The French conſtitution ſays, that the right of war and peace is in the nation. Where elſe ſhould it reſide, but in thoſe who are to pay the expence?

In England, this right is ſaid to reſide in a *metaphor*, ſhewn at the Tower for ſix-pence or a ſhilling a-piece, ſo are the lions; and it would be a ſtep nearer to reaſon to ſay it reſided in them, for any inanimate metaphor is no more than a hat or a cap. We can all ſee the abſurdity of worſhipping Aaron's molton calf, or Nebuchadnezzar's golden image; but why do men continue to practiſe in themſelves, the abſurdities they deſpiſe in others?

It may with reaſon be ſaid, that in the manner the Engliſh nation is repreſented, it ſignifies not where this right reſides, whether in the crown or in the parliament. War is the common harveſt of all thoſe who participate in the diviſion and expenditure of public money, in all countries. It is the art of *conquering at home:* the object of it is an increaſe of revenue; and as revenue cannot be increaſed without taxes, a pretence muſt be made for expenditures. In reviewing the hiſtory of the Engliſh government, its wars and its taxes, a ſtander-by, not blinded by prejudice, not warped by intereſt, would declare, that taxes were not raiſed to carry on wars, but that wars were raiſed to carry on taxes.

Mr. Burke, as a member of the houſe of commons, is a part of the Engliſh government; and though he profeſſes himſelf an enemy to war, he abuſes the French conſtitution, which ſeeks to explode it. He holds up the Engliſh government as a model in all its parts, to

* *It is a practice in ſome parts of the country, when two travellers have but one horſe, which like the national purſe will not carry double, that the one mounts and rides two or three miles a-head, and then ties the horſe to a gate, and walks on. When the ſecond traveller arrives, he takes the horſe, rides on, and paſſes his companion a mile or two, and ties again; and ſo on*—Ride and tie.

France; but he ſhould firſt know the remarks which the French make upon it. They contend, in favour of their own, that the portion of liberty enjoyed in England, is juſt enough to enſlave a country by, more productively than by deſpotiſm; and that as the real object of a deſpotiſm is revenue, that a government ſo formed obtains more than it could either by direct deſpotiſm, or in a full ſtate of freedom, and is, therefore, on the ground of intereſt, oppoſed to both. They account alſo for the readineſs which always appears in ſuch governments for engaging in wars, by remarking on the different motives which produce them. In deſpotic governments, wars are the effects of pride; but in thoſe governments in which they become the means of taxation, they acquire thereby a more permanent promptitude.

The French conſtitution, therefore, to provide againſt both thoſe evils, has taken away the power of declaring war from kings and miniſters, and placed the right where the expence muſt fall.

When the queſtion on the right of war and peace was agitating in the national aſſembly, the people of England appeared to be much intereſted in the event, and highly to applaud the deciſion.—As a principle, it applies as much to one country as to another. William the conqueror, *as a conqueror*, held this power of war and peace in himſelf, and his deſcendants have ever ſince claimed it as a right.

Although Mr. Burke has aſſerted the right of parliament at the revolution to bind and control the nation and poſterity for *ever*, he denies, at the ſame time, that the parliament or the nation had any right to alter what he calls the ſucceſſion of the crown, in any thing but in part, or by a ſort of modification. By his taking this ground, he throws the caſe back to the *Norman conqueſt*; and by thus running a line of ſucceſſion ſpringing from William the conqueror to the preſent day, he makes it neceſſary to enquire who and what William the conqueror was, and where he came from: and into the origin, hiſtory and nature of what are called prerogatives Every thing muſt have had a beginning, and the fog of time and antiquity ſhould be penetrated to diſcover it. Let then Mr. Burke bring forward his William of Normandy, for it is to this origin that his argument goes. It alſo unfortunately happens, in running this line of ſucceſſion, that another line, parallel thereto, preſents itſelf, which is, that if the ſucceſſion runs in the line of the conqueſt, the nation runs in the line of being conquered, and it ought to reſcue itſelf from this reproach.

But it will perhaps be ſaid, that though the power of declaring war deſcends into the heritage of the conqueſt, it is held in check by

the right of the parliament to withhold the ſupplies. It will always happen, when a thing is originally wrong, that amendments do not make it right, and it often happens that they do as much miſchief one way as good the other: and ſuch is the caſe here, for if the one raſhly declares war as a matter of right, and the other peremptorily withholds the ſupplies as a matter of right, the remedy becomes as bad or worſe than the diſeaſe. The one forces the nation to a combat, and the other ties its hands: But the more probable iſſue is, that the contraſt will end in a colluſion between the parties, and be made a ſcreen to both.

On this queſtion of war, three things are to be conſidered. Firſt, The right of declaring it: Secondly, The expence of ſupporting it: Thirdly, The mode of conducting it after it is declared. The French conſtitution places the *right* where the *expence* muſt fall, and this union can be only in the nation. The mode of conducting it after it is declared, it conſigns to the executive department.—Were this the caſe in all countries, we ſhould hear but little more of wars.

Before I proceed to conſider other parts of the French conſtitution, and by way of relieving the fatigue of argument, I will introduce an anecdote which I had from Dr. Franklin.

While the Doctor reſided in France as miniſter from America, during the war, he had numerous propoſals made to him by projectors of every country and of every kind, who wiſhed to go to the land that floweth with milk and honey, America; and among the reſt, there was one who offered himſelf to be king. He introduced his propoſal to the Doctor by letter, which is now in the hands of M. Beaumarchais, of Paris—ſtating, firſt, that as the Americans had diſmiſſed or ſent away* their king, that they would want another. Secondly, that himſelf was a Norman. Thirdly, that he was of a more ancient family than the dukes of Normandy, and of a more honourable deſcent, his line having never been baſtardized. Fourthly, that there was already a precedent in England, of kings coming out of Normandy: And on theſe grounds he reſted his offer, *enjoining* that the Doctor would forward it to America. But as the Doctor did not do this, nor yet ſend him an anſwer, the projector wrote a ſecond letter; in which he did not, it is true, threaten to go over and conquer America, but only, with great dignity, propoſed that if his offer was not accepted, that an acknowledgment of about £. 30,000 might be made to him for his generoſity! Now, as all

* *The word he uſed was* renvoyé, *diſmiſſed or ſent away.*

arguments reſpecting ſucceſſion muſt neceſſarily connect that ſucceſſion with ſome beginning. Mr. Burke's arguments on this ſubject go to ſhew, that there is no Engliſh origin of kings, and that they are deſcendants of the Norman line in right of the conqueſt. It may therefore be of ſervice to his doctrine to make this ſtory known, and to inform him, that in caſe of that natural extinction to which all mortality is ſubject, that kings may again be had from Normandy, on more reaſonable terms than William the conqueror; and conſequently, that the good people of England, at the revolution of 1688, might have done much better, had ſuch a generous Norman as *this* known *their* wants, and they had known *his*. The chivalry character which Mr. Burke ſo much admires, is certainly much eaſier to make a bargain with than a hard-dealing Dutchman. But, to return to the matters of the conſtitution—

The French conſtitution ſays, *There ſhall be no titles;* and of conſequence, all that claſs of equivocal generation, which in ſome countries is called "*ariſtocracy*," and in others "*nobility*," is done away, and the *peer* is exalted into *man*.

Titles are but nick-names, and every nick-name is a title. The thing is perfectly harmleſs in itſelf, but it marks a ſort of foppery in the human character which degrades it. It renders man into the diminutive of man in things which are great, and the counterfeit of woman in things which are little. It talks about its fine *blue ribband* like a girl, and ſhews its new *garter* like a child. A certain writer, of ſome antiquity, ſays, "When I was a child, I thought as a child; "but when I became a man, I put away childiſh things."

It is, properly, from the elevated mind of France that the folly of titles have fallen. It has outgrown the baby-clothes of *count* and *duke*, and breeched itſelf in manhood. France has not levelled, it has exalted. It has put down the dwarf to ſet up the man. The puniyiſm of a ſenſeleſs word like *duke*, or *count* or *earl*, has ceaſed to pleaſe. Even thoſe who poſſeſſed them have diſowned the gibberiſh, and, as they outgrew the rickets, have deſpiſed the rattle.—The genuine mind of man, thirſting for its native home, ſociety, contemns the gewgaws that ſeparate him from it. Titles are like circles drawn by the magician's wand, to contract the ſphere of man's felicity. He lives immured within the Baſtile of a word, and ſurveys at a diſtance the envied life of man.

Is it then any wonder that titles ſhould fall in France? Is it not a greater wonder they ſhould be kept up any where? What are they? What is their worth, and "what is their amount?" When we think

or ſpeak of a *judge* or a *general*, we aſſociate with it the ideas of office and character; we think of gravity in the one and bravery in the other: but when we uſe a word merely as a title, no ideas aſſociate with it. Through all the vocabulary of Adam, there is not ſuch an animal as a duke or a count; neither can we connect any certain idea to the words. Whether they mean ſtrength or weakneſs, wiſdom or folly, a child or a man, or a rider or a horſe, is all equivocal. What reſpect then can be paid to that which deſcribes nothing and which means nothing? Imagination has given figure and character to centaurs, ſatyrs, and down to all the fairy tribe; but titles baffle even the powers of fancy, and are a chimerical non-deſcript.

But this is not all—If a whole country is diſpoſed to hold them in contempt, all their value is gone, and none will own them. It is common opinion only that makes them any thing or nothing, or worſe than nothing. There is no occaſion to take titles away, for they take themſelves away when ſociety concurs to ridicule them. This ſpecies of imaginary conſequence has viſibly declined in every part of Europe, and it haſtens to its exit as the world of reaſon continues to riſe. There was a time when the loweſt claſs of what are called nobility was more thought of than the higheſt is now, and when a man in armour riding throughout Chriſtendom in queſt of adventures was more ſtared at than a modern duke. The world has ſeen this folly fall, and it has fallen by being laughed at, and the farce of titles will follow its fate. The patriots of France have diſcovered in good time, that rank and dignity in ſociety muſt take a new ground. The old one has fallen through. It muſt now take the ſubſtantial ground of character, inſtead of the chimerical ground of titles; and they have brought their titles to the altar, and made of them a burnt-offering to reaſon.

If no miſchief had annexed itſelf to the folly of titles, they would not have been worth a ſerious and formal deſtruction, ſuch as the national aſſembly have decreed them; and this makes it neceſſary to enquire further into the nature and character of ariſtocracy.

That, then, which is called ariſtocracy in ſome countries, and nobility in others, aroſe out of the governments founded upon conqueſt. It was orginally a military order for the purpoſe of ſupporting military government (for ſuch were all governments founded in conqueſt); and to keep up a ſucceſſion of this order for the purpoſe for which it was eſtabliſhed, all the younger branches of thoſe families were diſinherited, and the law of *primogeniture/hip* ſet up.

The nature and character of ariſtocracy ſhews itſelf to us in this

law. It is a law againſt every law of nature, and nature herſelf calls for its deſtruction. Eſtabliſh family juſtice and ariſtocracy falls. By the ariſtocratical law of primogeniture∫hip, in a family of ſix children, five are expoſed.—Ariſtocracy has never but *one* child. The reſt are begotten to be devoured. They are thrown to the cannibal for prey, and the natural parent prepares the unnatural repaſt.

As every thing which is out of nature in man, affects, more or leſs, the intereſt of ſociety, ſo does this. All the children which the ariſtocracy diſowns (which are all, except the eldeſt) are, in general, caſt like orphans on a pariſh, to be provided for by the public, but at a greater charge. Unneceſſary offices and places in governments and courts are created at the expence of the public to maintain them.

With what kind of parental reflections can the father or mother contemplate their younger offspring. By nature they are children, and by marriage they are heirs; but by ariſtocracy they are baſtards and orphans. They are the fleſh and blood of their parents in one line, and nothing akin to them in the other. To reſtore, therefore, parents to their children, and children to their parents—relations to each other, and man to ſociety—and to exterminate the monſter Ariſtocracy, root and branch—the French conſtitution has deſtroyed the law of *primogeniture∫hip*. Here then lies the monſter, and Mr. Burke, if he pleaſes, may write its epitaph.

Hitherto we have conſidered ariſtocracy chiefly in one point of view. We have now to conſider it in another. But whether we view it before or behind, or ſide-ways, or any way elſe, domeſtically or publicly, it is ſtill a monſter.

In France, ariſtocracy had one feature leſs in its countenance than what it has in ſome other countries. It did not compoſe a body of hereditary legiſlators. It was not "*a corporation of ariſtocracy*," for ſuch I have heard M. de la Fayette deſcribe an Engliſh houſe of peers. Let us then examine the grounds upon which the French conſtitution has reſolved againſt having ſuch an houſe in France.

Becauſe, in the firſt place, as is already mentioned, ariſtocracy is kept up by family tyranny and injuſtice.

Secondly, becauſe there is an unnatural unfitneſs in an ariſtocracy to be legiſlators for a nation. Their ideas of *diſtributive juſtice* are corrupted at the very ſource. They begin life by trampling on all their younger brothers and ſiſters, and relations of every kind, and are taught and educated ſo to do. With what ideas of juſtice or honour can that man enter an houſe of legiſlation, who abſorbs in his

own perſon the inheritance of a whole family of children, or doles out ſome pitiful portion with the inſolence of a gift?

Thirdly, becauſe the idea of hereditary legiſlators is as inconſiſtent as that of hereditary judges, or hereditary juries; and as abſurd as an hereditary mathematician, or an hereditary wiſe man; and as ridiculous as an hereditary poet-laureat.

Fourthly, becauſe a body of men holding themſelves accountable to nobody, ought not to be truſted by any body.

Fifthly, becauſe it is continuing the uncivilized principle of governments founded in conqueſt, and the baſe idea of man having property in man, and governing him by perſonal right.

Sixthly, becauſe ariſtocracy has a tendency to degenerate the human ſpecies. By the univerſal economy of nature it is known, and by the inſtance of the Jews it is proved, that the human ſpecies has a tendency to degenerate, in any ſmall number of perſons, when ſeparated from the general ſtock of ſociety, and intermarrying conſtantly with each other. It defeats even its pretended end, and becomes in time the oppoſite of what is noble in man. Mr. Burke talks of nobility; let him ſhew what it is. The greateſt characters the world have known, have roſe on the democratic floor. Ariſtocracy has not been able to keep a proportionate pace with democracy. The artificial *noble* ſhrinks into a dwarf before the *noble* of nature; and in the few inſtances (for there are ſome in all countries) in whom nature, as by a miracle, has ſurvived in ariſtocracy, *thoſe men deſpiſe it.* But it is time to proceed to a new ſubject.

The French conſtitution has reformed the condition of the clergy. It has raiſed the income of the lower and middle claſſes, and taken from the higher. None are now leſs than twelve hundred livres (fifty pounds ſterling) nor any higher than about two or three thouſand pounds. What will Mr. Burke place againſt this? Hear what he ſays.

He ſays, "that the people of England can ſee, without pain or "grudging, an archbiſhop precede a duke; they can ſee a biſhop "of Durham, or a biſhop of Wincheſter, in poſſeſſion of £. 10,000 "a-year; and cannot ſee why it is in worſe hands than eſtates to "the like amount in the hands of this earl or that 'ſquire." And Mr. Burke offers this as an example to France.

As to the firſt part, whether the archbiſhop precedes the duke, or the duke the biſhop, it is, I believe, to the people in general, ſomewhat like *Sternhold* and *Hopkins*, or *Hopkins* and *Sternhold*; you may put which you pleaſe firſt: And as I confeſs that I do

not underſtand the merits of this caſe, I will not contend it with Mr. Burke.

But with reſpect to the latter, I have ſomething to ſay. Mr. Burke has not put the caſe right. The compariſon is out of order by being put between the biſhop and the earl or the 'ſquire. It ought to be put between the biſhop and the curate, and then it will ſtand thus: *The people of England can ſee, without pain or grudging, a biſhop of Durham, or a biſhop of Wincheſter, in poſſeſſion of ten thouſand pounds a-year, and a curate on thirty or forty pounds a-year, or leſs.* No, ſir, they certainly do not ſee theſe things without great pain and grudging. It is a caſe that applies itſelf to every man's ſenſe of juſtice, and is one among many that calls aloud for a conſtitution.

In France, the cry of "*the church! the church!*" was repeated as often as in Mr. Burke's book, and as loudly as when the diſſenters' bill was before the Engliſh parliament; but the generality of the French clergy were not to be deceived by this cry any longer. They knew, that whatever the pretence might be, it was themſelves who were one of the principal objects of it. It was the cry of the high beneficed clergy, to prevent any regulation of income taking place between thoſe of ten thouſand pounds a-year and the pariſh prieſt. They, therefore, joined their caſe to thoſe of every other oppreſſed claſs of men, and by this union obtained redreſs.

The French conſtitution has aboliſhed tithes, that ſource of perpetual diſcontent between the tithe-holder and the pariſhioner. When land is held on tithe, it is in the condition of an eſtate held between two parties; the one receiving one tenth, and the other nine-tenths of the produce: And, conſequently, on principles of equity, if the eſtate can be improved, and made to produce by that improvement double or treble what it did before, or in any other ratio, the expence of ſuch improvement ought to be borne in like proportion between the parties who are to ſhare the produce. But this is not the caſe in tithes; the farmer bears the whole expence, and the tithe-holder takes a tenth of the improvement, in addition to the original tenth, and by this means gets the value of two tenths inſtead of one. This is another caſe that calls for a conſtitution.

The French conſtitution hath aboliſhed or renounced *toleration*, and *intoleration* alſo, and hath eſtabliſhed UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CONSCIENCE.

Toleration is not the *oppoſite* of intoleration, but is the *counterfeit* of it. Both are deſpotiſms. The one aſſumes to itſelf the right of

withholding liberty of conſcience, and the other of granting it. The one is the pope, armed with fire and faggot, and the other is the pope ſelling or granting indulgences. The former is church and ſtate, and the latter is church and traffic.

But toleration may be viewed in a much ſtronger light. Man worſhips not himſelf, but his Maker; and the liberty of conſcience which he claims, is not for the ſervice of himſelf, but of his God. In this caſe, therefore, we muſt neceſſarily have the aſſociated idea of two beings; the *mortal* who renders the worſhip, and the IMMORTAL BEING who is worſhipped. Toleration, therefore, places itſelf, not between man and man, nor between church and church, nor between one denomination of religion and another, but between God and man; between the being who worſhips, and the BEING who is worſhipped; and by the ſame act of aſſumed authority by which it tolerates man to pay his worſhip, it preſumptuouſly and blaſphemouſly ſets up itſelf to tolerate the Almighty to receive it.

Were a bill brought into parliament, entitled, "An *act* to tole-"rate or grant liberty to the Almighty to receive the worſhip of a "Jew or a Turk," or "to prohibit the Almighty from receiving "it," all men would ſtartle, and call it blaſphemy. There would be an uproar. The preſumption of toleration in religious matters would then preſent itſelf unmaſked: But the preſumption is not the leſs becauſe the name of "man" only appears to thoſe laws, for the aſſociated idea of the *worſhipper* and the *worſhipped* cannot be ſeparated.—Who, then, art thou, vain duſt and aſhes! by whatever name thou art called, whether a king, a biſhop, a church or a ſtate, a parliament or any thing elſe, that obtrudeſt thine inſignificance between the ſoul of man and his Maker? Mind thine own concerns. If he believes not as thou believeſt, it is a proof that thou believeſt not as he believeth, and there is no earthly power can determine between you.

With reſpect to what are called denominations of religion, if every one is left to judge of his own religion, there is no ſuch thing as a religion that is wrong; but if they are to judge of each other's religion, there is no ſuch thing as a religion that is right; and therefore, all the world are right, or all the world are wrong. But with reſpect to religion itſelf, without regard to names, and as directing itſelf from the univerſal family of mankind to the divine object of all adoration, *it is man bringing to his Maker the fruits of his heart;* and though theſe fruits may differ from each other, like the fruits of the earth, the grateful tribute of every one is accepted.

A biſhop of Durham, or a biſhop of Wincheſter, or the archbiſhop who heads the dukes, will not refuſe a tithe-ſheaf of wheat, becauſe it is not a cock of hay; nor a cock of hay, becauſe it is not a ſheaf of wheat; nor a pig, becauſe it is neither the one nor the other: But theſe ſame perſons, under the figure of an eſtabliſhed church, will not permit their Maker to receive the varied tithes of man's devotion.

One of the continual choruſes of Mr. Burke's book is, "Church and ſtate;" he does not mean ſome one particular church, or ſome one particular ſtate, but any church and ſtate; and he uſes the term as a general figure to hold forth the political doctrine of always uniting the church with the ſtate in every country, and he cenſures the national aſſembly for not having done this in France. Let us beſtow a few thoughts on this ſubject.

All religions are in their nature mild and benign, and united with principles of morality. They could not have made proſelytes at firſt, by profeſſing any thing that was vicious, cruel, perſecuting, or immoral. Like every thing elſe, they had their beginning; and they proceeded by perſuaſion, exhortation, and example. How then is it that they loſe their native mildneſs, and become moroſe and intolerant?

It proceeds from the connection which Mr. Burke recommends. By engendering the church with the ſtate, a ſort of mule animal, capable only of deſtroying, and not of breeding up, is produced, called, *The Church eſtabliſhed by Law*. It is a ſtranger, even from its birth, to any parent mother on which it is begotten, and whom in time it kicks out and deſtroys.

The inquiſition in Spain does not proceed from the religion originally profeſſed, but from this mule animal, engendered between the church and the ſtate. The burnings in Smithfield proceeded from the ſame heterogeneous production; and it was the regeneration of this ſtrange animal in England afterwards, that renewed rancour and irreligion among the inhabitants, and that drove the people called Quakers and Diſſenters to America. Perſecution is not an original feature in *any* religion; but it is always the ſtrongly-marked feature of all law-religions, or religions eſtabliſhed by law. Take away the law-eſtabliſhment, and every religion re-aſſumes its original benignity. In America, a catholic prieſt is a good citizen, a good character, and a good neighbour; an epiſcopalian miniſter is of the ſame deſcription: And this proceeds, independent of men, from there being no law-eſtabliſhment in America.

If alſo we view this matter in a temporal ſenſe, we ſhall ſee the ill effects it has had on the proſperity of nations. The union of church and ſtate has impoveriſhed Spain. The revoking the edict of Nantz drove the ſilk manufacture from that country into England; and church and ſtate are now driving the cotton manufacture from England to America and France. Let then Mr. Burke continue to preach his anti-political doctrine of church and ſtate. It will do ſome good. The national aſſembly will not follow his advice, but will benefit by his folly. It was by obſerving the ill effects of it in England, that America has been warned againſt it; and it is by experiencing them in France, that the national aſſembly have aboliſhed it, and, like America, has eſtabliſhed UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CONSCIENCE, AND UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CITIZENSHIP.*

* *When in any country we ſee extraordinary circumſtances taking place, they naturally lead any man who has a talent for obſervation and inveſtigation, to enquire into the cauſes. The manufactures of Mancheſter, Birmingham, and Sheffield, are the moſt principal manufactures in England. From whence did this ariſe? A little obſervation will explain the caſe. The principal, and the generality of the inhabitants of thoſe places, are not of what is called in England*, the church eſtabliſhed by law; *and they, or their fathers (for it is within but a few years) withdrew from the perſecution of the chartered towns, where teſt-laws more particularly operate, and eſtabliſhed a ſort of aſylum for themſelves in thoſe places. It was the only aſylum that then offered, for the reſt of Europe was worſe. But the caſt is now changing. France and America bid all comers welcome, and initiate them into all the rights of citizenſhip. Policy and intereſt, therefore, will, but perhaps too late, dictate in England, what reaſon and juſtice could not. Thoſe manufactures are withdrawing, and are ariſing in other places. There is now erecting at Paſſey, three miles from Paris, a large cotton mill, and ſeveral are already erected in America. Soon after the rejecting the bill for repealing the teſt-law, one of the richeſt manufacturers in England ſaid in my hearing, "England, Sir, is not a "country for a diſſenter to live in—we muſt go to France." Theſe are truths, and it is doing juſtice to both parties to tell them. It is chiefly the diſſenters that have carried Engliſh manufactures to the height they are now at, and the ſame men have it in their power to carry them away; and though thoſe manufactures would afterwards continue to be made in thoſe places, the foreign market will be loſt. There are frequently appearing in the London Gazette, extracts from certain acts to prevent machines, and as far as it can extend to perſons, from going out of the country. It ap-*

I will here ceaſe the compariſon with reſpect to the principles of the French conſtitution, and conclude this part of the ſubject with a few obſervations on the organization of the formal parts of the French and Engliſh governments.

The executive power in each country is in the hands of a perſon ſtyled, the king; but the French conſtitution diſtinguiſhes between the king and the ſovereign: It conſiders the ſtation of king as official, and places ſovereignty in the nation.

The repreſentatives of the nation, which compoſe the national aſſembly, and who are the legiſlative power, originate in and from the people by election, as an inherent right in the people. In England it is otherwiſe; and this ariſes from the original eſtabliſhment of what is called its monarchy; for, as by the conqueſt all the rights of the people or the nation were abſorbed into the hands of the conqueror, and who added the title of king to that of conqueror, thoſe ſame matters which in France are now held as rights in the people, or in the nation, are held in England as grants from what is called the crown. The parliament in England, in both its branches, was erected by patents from the deſcendants of the conqueror. The houſe of commons did not originate as a matter of right in the people, to delegate or elect, but as a grant or boon.

By the French conſtitution, the nation is always named before the king. The third article of the declaration of rights ſays, "*The nation is eſſentially the ſource* (or fountain) *of all ſovereignty.*" Mr. Burke argues, that, in England, a king is the fountain—that he is the fountain of all honour. But as this idea is evidently deſcended from the conqueſt, I ſhall make no other remark upon it than that it is the nature of conqueſt to turn every thing upſide down; and as Mr. Burke will not be refuſed the privilege of ſpeaking twice, and as there are but two parts in the figure, the *fountain* and the *ſpout*, he will be right the ſecond time.

The French conſtitution puts the legiſlative before the executive; the law before the king; *La loi, le roi.* This alſo is in the natural or-

pears from theſe, that the ill effects of the teſt-laws and church-eſtabliſhment begin to be much ſuſpected; but the remedy of force can never ſupply the remedy of reaſon. In the progreſs of leſs than a century, all the unrepreſented part of England, of all denominations, which is at leaſt a hundred times the moſt numerous, may begin to feel the neceſſity of a conſtitution, and then all thoſe matters will come regularly before them.

der of things; becauſe laws muſt have exiſtence, before they can have execution.

A king in France does not, in addreſſing himſelf to the national aſſembly, ſay, "my aſſembly," ſimilar to the phraſe uſed in England of "*my* parliament;" neither can he uſe it conſiſtent with the conſtitution, nor could it be admitted. There may be propriety in the uſe of it in England, becauſe as is before mentioned, both houſes of parliament originated out of what is called the crown, by patent or boon—and not out of the inherent rights of the people, as the national aſſembly does in France, and whoſe name deſignates its origin.

The preſident of the national aſſembly does not aſk the king *to grant to the aſſembly liberty of ſpeech*, as is the caſe with the Engliſh houſe of commons. The conſtitutional dignity of the national aſſembly cannot debaſe itſelf. Speech is, in the firſt place, one of the natural rights of man, always retained; and with reſpect to the national aſſembly, the uſe of it is their *duty*, and the nation is their *authority*. They were elected by the greateſt body of men exerciſing the right of election the European world ever ſaw. They ſprung not from the filth of rotten boroughs, nor are they the vaſſal repreſentatives of ariſtocratical ones. Feeling the proper dignity of their character, they ſupport it. Their parliamentary language, whether for or againſt a queſtion, is free, bold, and manly, and extends to all the parts and circumſtances of the caſe. If any matter or ſubject reſpecting the executive department, or the perſon who preſides in it (the king), comes before them, it is debated on with the ſpirit of men, and the language of gentlemen; and their anſwer, or their addreſs, is returned in the ſame ſtyle. They ſtand not aloof with the gaping vacuity of vulgar ignorance, nor bend with the cringe of ſycophantic inſignificance. The graceful pride of truth knows no extremes, and preſerves, in every latitude of life, the right angled character of man.

Let us now look to the other ſide of the queſtion. In the addreſſes of the Engliſh parliaments to their kings, we ſee neither the intrepid ſpirit of the old parliaments of France, nor the ſerene dignity of the preſent national aſſembly; neither do we ſee in them any thing of the ſtyle of Engliſh manners, which borders ſomewhat on bluntneſs. Since then they are neither of foreign extraction, nor naturally of Engliſh production, their origin muſt be ſought for elſewhere, and that origin is the Norman conqueſt. They are evidently of the vaſſalage claſs of manners, and emphatically mark the proſtrate diſtance

that exists in no other condition of men than between the conqueror and the conquered. That this vassalage idea and style of speaking was not got rid of, even at the revolution of 1688, is evident from the declaration of parliament to William and Mary, in these words: "We do most humbly and faithfully *submit* ourselves, our heirs and "posterity for ever." Submission is wholly a vassalage term, repugnant to the dignity of freedom, and an echo of the language used at the conquest.

As the estimation of all things is by comparison, the revolution of 1688, however from circumstances it may have been exalted above its value, will find its level. It is already on the wane, eclipsed by the enlarging orb of reason, and the luminous revolutions of America and France. In less than another century, it will go, as well as Mr. Burke's labours, "to the family vault of all the Capulets." Mankind will then scarcely believe that a country calling itself free, would send to Holland for a man, and clothe him with power, on purpose to put themselves in fear of him, and give him almost a million sterling a-year for leave to *submit* themselves and their posterity, like bond-men and bond-women, for ever.

But there is a truth that ought to be made known: I have had the opportunity of seeing it: Which is, *that, notwithstanding appearances, there is not any description of men that despise monarchy so much as courtiers.* But they well know, that if it were seen by others, as it is seen by them, the juggle could not be kept up. They are in the condition of men who get their living by a show, and to whom the folly of that show is so familiar that they ridicule it; but were the audience to be made as wise, in this respect, as themselves, there would be an end to the show and the profits with it. The difference between a republican and a courtier with respect to monarchy is, that the one opposes monarchy believing it to be something, and the other laughs at it knowing it to be nothing.

As I used sometimes to correspond with Mr. Burke, believing him then to be a man of sounder principles than his book shews him to be, I wrote to him last winter from Paris, and gave him an account how prosperously matters were going on. Among other subjects in that letter, I referred to the happy situation the national assembly were placed in; that they had taken a ground on which their moral duty and their political interest were united. They have not to hold out a language which they do not believe, for the fraudulent purpose of making others believe it. Their station requires no artifice to support it, and can only be maintained by enlightening mankind. It is

not their intereſt to cheriſh ignorance, but to diſpel it. They are not in the caſe of a miniſterial or an oppoſition party in England, who, though they are oppoſed, are ſtill united to keep up the common myſtery. The national aſſembly muſt throw open a magazine of light. It muſt ſhew man the proper character of man; and the nearer it can bring him to that ſtandard, the ſtronger the national aſſembly becomes.

In contemplating the French conſtitution, we ſee in it a rational order of things. The principles harmoniſe with the forms, and both with their origin. It may perhaps be ſaid as an excuſe for bad forms, that the are nothing more than forms; but this is a miſtake. Forms grow out of principles, and operate to continue the principles they grow from. It is impoſſible to practiſe a bad form on any thing but a bad principle. It cannot be ingrafted on a good one; and wherever the forms in any government are bad, it is a certain indication that the principles are bad alſo.

I will here finally cloſe this ſubject. I began it by remarking that Mr. Burke had *voluntarily* declined going into a compariſon of the Engliſh and French conſtitutions. He apologiſes (in page 241) for not doing it, by ſaying that he had not time. Mr. Burke's book was upwards of eight months in hand, and it extended to a volume of three hundred and fifty-ſix pages. As his omiſſion does injury to his cauſe, his apology makes it worſe; and men on the Engliſh ſide of the water will begin to conſider, whether there is not ſome radical defect in what is called the Engliſh conſtitution, that made it neceſſary in Mr. Burke to ſuppreſs the compariſon, to avoid bringing it into view.

As Mr. Burke has not written on conſtitutions, ſo neither has he written on the French revolution. He gives no account of its commencement or its progreſs. He only expreſſes his wonder. "It "looks," ſays he, "to me as if I were in a great criſis, not of the "affairs of France alone, but of all Europe, perhaps of more than "Europe. All circumſtances taken together, the French revolu- "tion is the moſt aſtoniſhing that has hitherto happened in the "world."

As wiſe men are aſtoniſhed at fooliſh things, and other people at wiſe ones, I know not on which ground to account for Mr. Burke's aſtoniſhment; but certain it is that he does not underſtand the French revolution. It has apparently burſt forth like a creation from a chaos, but it is no more than the conſequence of a mental revolution priorily exiſting in France. The mind of the nation had

changed before hand, and the new order of things has naturally followed the new order of thoughts.—I will here, as concisely as I can, trace out the growth of the French revolution, and mark the circumstances that have contributed to produce it.

The despotism of Louis XIV. united with the gaiety of his court, and the gaudy ostentation of his character, had so humbled, and at the same time so fascinated the mind of France, that the people appear to have lost all sense of their own dignity, in contemplating that of their grand monarch: And the whole reign of Louis XV. remarkable only for weakness and effeminacy, made no other alteration than that of spreading a sort of lethargy over the nation, from which it shewed no disposition to rise.

The only signs which appeared of the spirit of liberty during those periods, are to be found in the writings of the French philosophers. Montesquieu, president of the parliament of Bourdeaux, went as far as a writer under a despotic government could well proceed; and being obliged to divide himself between principle and prudence, his mind often appears under a veil, and we ought to give him credit for more than he has expressed.

Voltaire, who was both the flatterer and satyrist of despotism, took another line. His forte lay in exposing and ridiculing the superstitions which priest-craft united with state-craft had interwoven with governments. It was not from the purity of his principles, or his love of mankind (for satire and philanthropy are not naturally concordant) but from his strong capacity of seeing folly in its true shape, and his irresistible propensity to expose it, that he made those attacks. They were however as formidable as if the motives had been virtuous; and he merits the thanks rather than the esteem of mankind.

On the contrary, we find in the writings of Rousseau and Abbe Raynal, a loveliness of sentiment in favour of liberty, that excites respect, and elevates the human faculties; yet having raised this animation, they do not direct its operations, but leave the mind in love with an object, without describing the means of possessing it.

The writings of Quisne, Turgot, and the friends of those authors, are of a serious kind; but they laboured under the same disadvantage with Montesquieu; their writings abound with moral maxims of government, but are rather directed to economise and reform the administration of the government, than the government itself.

But all those writings and many others had their weight; and by the different manner in which they treated the subject of government, Montesquieu by his judgment and knowledge of laws, Voltaire by his

wit, Rouſſeau and Raynal by their animation, and Quiſne and Turgot by their moral maxims and ſyſtems of economy, readers of every claſs met with ſomething to their taſte, and a ſpirit of political enquiry began to diffuſe itſelf through the nation at the time the diſpute between England and the then colonies of America broke out.

In the war which France afterwards engaged in, it is very well known that the nation appeared to be before hand with the French miniſtry. Each of them had its view: But thoſe views were directed to different objects; the one ſought liberty, and the other retaliation on England. The French officers and ſoldiers who after this went to America, were eventually placed in the ſchool of freedom, and learned the practice as well as the principles of it by heart.

As it was impoſſible to ſeparate the military events which took place in America from the principles of the American revolution, the publication of thoſe events in France neceſſarily connected themſelves with the principles that produced them. Many of the facts were in themſelves principles; ſuch as the declaration of American independence, and the treaty of alliance between France and America, which recogniſed the natural rights of man, and juſtified reſiſtance to oppreſſion.

The then miniſter of France, count Vergennes, was not the friend of America: and it is both juſtice and gratitude to ſay, that it was the queen of France who gave the cauſe of America a faſhion at the French court. Count Vergennes was the perſonal and ſocial friend of Dr. Franklin; and the Doctor had obtained, by his ſenſible gracefulneſs, a ſort of influence over him; but with reſpect to principles, count Vergennes was a deſpot.

The ſituation of Dr. Franklin as miniſter from America to France ſhould be taken into the chain of circumſtances. The diplomatic character is of itſelf the narroweſt ſphere of ſociety that man can act in. It forbids intercourſe by a reciprocity of ſuſpicion; and a diplomatic is a ſort of unconnected atom, continally repelling and repelled. But this was not the caſe with Dr. Franklin: He was not the diplomatic of a court, but of MAN. His character as a philoſopher had been long eſtabliſhed. and his circle of ſociety in France was univerſal.

Count Vergennes reſiſted for a conſiderable time the publication of the American conſtitutions in France, tranſlated into the French language; but even in this he was obliged to give way to public opinion, and a ſort of propriety in admitting to appear what he had undertaken to defend. The American conſtitutions were to liberty

what a grammar is to language: They define its parts of ſpeech, and practically conſtruct them into ſyntax.

The peculiar ſituation of the then marquis de la Fayette is another link in the great chain. He ſerved in America as an American officer under a commiſſion of congreſs, and by the univerſality of his acquaintance, was in cloſe friendſhip with the civil government of America, as well as with the military line. He ſpoke the language of the country, entered into the diſcuſſions on the principles of government, and was always a welcome friend at any election.

When the war cloſed, a vaſt reinforcement to the cauſe of liberty ſpread itſelf over France, by the return of the French officers and ſoldiers. A knowledge of the practice was then joined to the theory; and all that was wanting to give it real exiſtence, was opportunity. Man, cannot, properly ſpeaking, make circumſtances for his purpoſe, but he always has it in his power to improve them when they occur: And this was the caſe in France.

M. Neckar was diſplaced in May 1781; and by the ill-management of the finances afterwards, and particularly during the extravagant adminiſtration of M. Calonne, the revenue of France, which was nearly twenty-four millions ſterling per year, was become unequal to the expenditures, not becauſe the revenue had decreaſed, but becauſe the expences had increaſed, and this was the circumſtance which the nation laid hold of to bring forward a revolution. The Engliſh miniſter, Mr. Pitt, has frequently alluded to the ſtate of the French finances in his budgets, without underſtanding the ſubject. Had the French parliaments been as ready to regiſter edicts for new taxes, as an Engliſh parliament is to grant them, there had been no derangement in the finances, nor yet any revolution; but this will better explain itſelf as I proceed.

It will be neceſſary here to ſhew how taxes were formerly raiſed in France. The king, or rather the court or miniſtry acting under the uſe of that name, framed the edicts for taxes at their own diſcretion, and ſent them to the parliaments to be regiſtered; for until they were regiſtered; by the parliaments, they were not operative. Diſputes had long exiſted between the court and the parliament with reſpect to the extent of the parliament's authority on this head. The court inſiſted that the authority of parliament went no further than to remonſtrate or ſhew reaſons againſt the tax, reſerving to itſelf the right of determining whether the reaſons were well or ill-founded; and in conſequence thereof, either to withdraw the edict as a matter of choice, or to *order* it to be enregiſtered as a matter of authority.

The parliaments on their part inſiſted, that they had not only a right to remonſtrate, but to reject; and on this ground they were always ſupported by the nation.

But, to return to the order of my narrative—M. Calonne wanted money; and as he knew the ſturdy diſpoſition of the parliaments with reſpect to new taxes, he ingeniouſly ſought either to approach them by a more gentle means than that of direct authority, or to get over their heads by a manœuvre: And, for this purpoſe, he revived the project of aſſembling a body of men from the ſeveral provinces, under the ſtyle of an "aſſembly of the notables," or men of note, who met in 1787, and who were either to recommend taxes to the parliaments, or to act as a parliament themſelves. An aſſembly under this name had been called in 1687.

As we are to view this as the firſt practical ſtep towards the revolution, it will be proper to enter into ſome particulars reſpecting it. The aſſembly of the notables has in ſome places been miſtaken for the ſtates-general, but was wholly a different body; the ſtates-general being always by election. The perſons who compoſed the aſſembly of the notables were all nominated by the king, and conſiſted of one hundred and forty-members. But as M. Calonne could not depend upon a majority of this aſſembly in his favour, he very ingeniouſly arranged them in ſuch a manner as to make forty-four a majority of one hundred and forty: to effect this, he diſpoſed of them into ſeven ſeparate committees, of twenty members each. Every general queſtion was to be decided, not by a majority of perſons, but by a majority of committees; and as eleven votes would make a majority in a committee, and four committees a majority of ſeven, M. Calonne had good reaſon to conclude, that as forty-four would determine any general queſtion, he could not be out-voted. But all his plans deceived him, and in the event became his overthrow.

The then marquis de la Fayette was placed in the ſecond committee, of which count D'Artois was preſident: and as money-matters was the object, it naturally brought into view every circumſtance connected with it. M. de la Fayette made a verbal charge againſt Calonne, for ſelling crown lands to the amount of two millions of livres, in a manner that appeared to be unknown to the king. The count D'Artois (as if to intimidate, for the Baſtile was then in being) aſked the marquis, if he would render the charge in writing? He replied that he would. The count D'Artois did not demand it, but brought a meſſage from the king to that purport. M. de la Fayette then delivered in his charge in writing, to be given to the king, un-

dertaking to support it. No farther proceedings were had upon this affair; but M. Calonne was soon after dismissed by the king, and set off to England.

As M. de la Fayette from the experience he had seen in America, was better acquainted with the science of civil government than the generality of the members who composed the assembly of the notables could then be, the brunt of the business fell considerably to his share. The plan of those who had a constitution in view, was to contend with the court on the ground of taxes, and some of them openly professed their object. Disputes frequently arose between count D'Artois and M. de la Fayette upon various subjects. With respect to the arrears already incurred, the latter proposed to remedy them, by accommodating the expences to the revenue, instead of the revenue to the expences; and as objects of reform, he proposed to abolish the Bastile, and all the state-prisons throughout the nation (the keeping of which was attended with great expence) and to suppress *lettres de cachet*. But those matters were not then much attended to; and with respect to *lettres de cachet, a majority of the nobles appeared to be in favour of them.*

On the subject of supplying the treasury by new taxes, the assembly declined taking the matter on themselves, concurring in the opinion that they had not authority. In a debate on this subject, M. de la Fayette said, that raising money by taxes could only be done by a national assembly, freely elected by the people, and acting as their representatives. Do you mean, said the count D'Artois, the *states-general?* M. de la Fayette replied, that he did. Will you, said the count D'Artois, sign what you say, to be given to the king? The other replied, that he not only would do this, but that he would go farther, and say, that the effectual mode would be, for the king to agree to the establishment of a constitution.

As one of the plans had thus failed, that of getting the assembly to act as a parliament, the other came into view, that of recommending. On this subject, the assembly agreed to recommend two new taxes to be enregistered by the parliament, the one a stamp-tax, and the other a territorial tax, or sort of land-tax. The two have been estimated at about five millions sterling, *per ann.* We have now to turn our attention to the parliaments, on whom the business was again devolving.

The archbishop of Thoulouse (since archbishop of Sens, and now a cardinal) was appointed to the administration of the finances, soon after the dismission of Calonne. He was also made prime minister, an

office that did not always exiſt in France. When this office did not exiſt, the chief of each of the principal departments tranſacted buſineſs immediately with the king; but when a prime miniſter was appointed, they did buſineſs only with him. The archbiſhop arrived to more ſtate-authority than any miniſter ſince the duke de Choiſeuil, and the nation was ſtrongly diſpoſed in his favour; but by a line of conduct ſcarcely to be accounted for, he perverted every opportunity, turned out a deſpot, and ſunk into diſgrace, and a cardinal.

The aſſembly of the notables having broke up, the new miniſter ſent the edicts for the two new taxes recommended by the aſſembly to the parliaments, to be enregiſtered. They of courſe came firſt before the parliament of Paris, who returned for anſwer, *That with ſuch a revenue as the nation then ſupported, the name of taxes ought not to be mentioned, but for the purpoſe of reducing them;* and threw both the edicts out.*

On this refuſal, the parliament was ordered to Verſailles, where, in the uſual form, the king held, what under the old government was called a bed of juſtice: And the two edicts were enregiſtered in preſence of the parliament, by an order of ſtate, in the manner mentioned in page 87. On this, the parliament immediately returned to Paris, renewed their ſeſſion in form, and ordered the enregiſtering to be ſtruck out, declaring that every thing done at Verſailles was illegal. All the members of parliament were then ſerved with lettres de cachet, and exiled to Trois; but as they continued as inflexible in exile as before, and as vengeance did not ſupply the place of taxes, they were after a ſhort time recalled to Paris.

The edicts were again tendered to them, and the count D'Artois undertook to act as repreſentative for the king. For this purpoſe, he came from Verſailles to Paris, in a train of proceſſion; and the parliament were aſſembled to receive him. But ſhow and parade had loſt their influence in France; and whatever ideas of importance he might ſet off with, he had to return with thoſe of mortification and diſappointment. On alighting from his carriage to aſcend the ſteps of the parliament houſe, the crowd (which was numerouſly collected) threw out trite expreſſions, ſaying, "this is monſieur D'Artois, who "wants more of our money to ſpend." The marked diſapprobation which he ſaw, impreſſed him with apprehenſions; and the word

* *When the Engliſh miniſter, Mr. Pitt, mentions the French finances again in the Engliſh parliament, it would be well that he noticed this as an example.*

Aux arms (To arms) was given out by the officer of the guard who attended him. It was ſo loudly vociferated, that it echoed through the avenues of the houſe, and produced a temporary confuſion: I was then ſtanding in one of the apartments through which he had to paſs, and could not avoid reflecting how wretched is the condition of a diſreſpected man.

He endeavoured to impreſs the parliament by great words, and opened his authority by ſaying, "The king, our lord and maſter." The parliament received him very coolly, and with their uſual determination not to regiſter the taxes: And in this manner the interview ended.

After this a new ſubject took place: In the various debates and conteſts that aroſe between the court and the parliaments on the ſubject of taxes, the parliament of Paris at laſt declared, that although it had been cuſtomary for parliaments to enregiſter edicts for taxes as a matter of convenience, the right belonged only to the *ſtates-general;* and that, therefore, the parliaments could no longer with propriety continue to debate on what it had not authority to act. The king after this came to Paris, and held a meeting with the parliament, in which he continued from ten in the morning till about ſix in the evening; and, in a manner that appeared to proceed from him, as if unconſulted upon with the cabinet or the miniſtry, gave his word to the parliament, that the ſtates general ſhould be convened.

But after this another ſcene aroſe, on a ground different from all the former. The miniſter and the cabinet were averſe to calling the ſtates-general: They well knew, that if the ſtates-general were aſſembled, that themſelves muſt fall: And as the king had not mentioned *any time*, they hit on a project calculated to elude, without appearing to oppoſe.

For this purpoſe, the court ſet about making a ſort of conſtitution itſelf: It was principally the work of M. Lamoignon, keeper of the ſeals, who afterwards ſhot himſelf. The new arrangement conſiſted in eſtabliſhing a body under the name of a *cour pléniere*, or full court, in which were inveſted all the powers that the government might have occaſion to make uſe of. The perſons compoſing this court to be nominated by the king; the contended right of taxation was given up on the part of the king, and a new criminal code of laws, and law proceedings, was ſubſtituted in the room of the former. The thing, in many points, contained better principles than thoſe upon which the government had hitherto been adminiſtered: But with reſpect to the *cour pléniere*, it was no other than a medium

through which deſpotiſm was to paſs, without appearing to act directly from itſelf.

The cabinet had high expectations from their new contrivance. The perſons who were to compoſe the *cour pléniere*, were already nominated; and as it was neceſſary to carry a fair appearance, many of the beſt characters in the nation were appointed among the number. It was to commence on the 8th of May, 1788: But an oppoſition aroſe to it, on two grounds—the one as to principle, the other as to form.

On the ground of principle it was contended, That government had not a right to alter itſelf; and that if the practice was once admitted, it would grow into a principle, and be made a precedent for any future alterations the government might wiſh to eſtabliſh: That the right of altering the government was a national right, and not a right of government. And on the ground of form, it was contended, that the *cour pléniere* was nothing more than a large cabinet.

The then dukes de la Rochefoucault, Luxembourg, de Noailles, and many others, refuſed to accept the nomination, and ſtrenuouſly oppoſed the whole plan. When the edict for eſtabliſhing this new court was ſent to the parliaments to be enregiſtered, and put into execution, they reſiſted alſo. The parliament of Paris not only refuſed, but denied the authority; and the conteſt renewed itſelf between the parliament and the cabinet more ſtrongly than ever. While the parliament were ſitting in debate on this ſubject, the miniſtry ordered a regiment of ſoldiers to ſurround the houſe, and form a blockade. The members ſent out for beds and proviſion, and lived as in a beſieged citadel; and as this had no effect, the commanding officer was ordered to enter the parliament houſe and ſeize them, which he did, and ſome of the principal members were ſhut up in different priſons. About the ſame time a deputation of perſons arrived from the province of Brittany, to remonſtrate againſt the eſtabliſhment of the *cour pléniere*; and thoſe the archbiſhop ſent to the Baſtile. But the ſpirit of the nation was not to be overcome; and it was ſo fully ſenſible of the ſtrong ground it had taken, that of withholding taxes, that it contented itſelf with keeping up a ſort of quiet reſiſtance, which effectually overthrew all the plans at that time formed againſt it. The project of the *cour pléniere* was at laſt obliged to be given up, and the prime miniſter not long afterwards followed its fate; and M. Neckar was recalled into office.

The attempt to eſtabliſh the *cour pléniere*; had an effect upon the nation, which itſelf did not perceive. It was a ſort of new form of

government, that inſenſibly ſerved to put the old one out of ſight, and to unhinge it from the ſuperſtitious authority of antiquity. It was government dethroning government; and the old one, by attempting to make a new one, made a chaſm.

The failure of this ſcheme renewed the ſubject of convening the ſtates-general; and this gave riſe to a new ſeries of politics. There was no ſettled form for convening the ſtates-general: All that it poſitively meant, was a deputation from what was then called the clergy, the nobleſſe, and the commons; but their numbers, or their proportions, had not been always the ſame. They had been convened only on extraordinary occaſions, the laſt of which was in 1614; their numbers were then in equal proportions, and they voted by orders.

It could not well eſcape the ſagacity of M. Neckar, that the mode of 1614 would anſwer neither the purpoſe of the then government, nor of the nation. As matters were at that time circumſtanced, it would have been too contentious to argue upon any thing. The debates would have been endleſs upon privileges and exemptions, in which neither the wants of the government, nor the wiſhes of the nation for a conſtitution, would have been attended to. But as he did not chooſe to take the deciſion upon himſelf, he ſummoned again the *aſſembly of the notables*, and referred it to them. This body was in general intereſted in the deciſion, being chiefly of the ariſtocracy and the high-paid clergy; and they decided in favour of the mode of 1614. This deciſion was againſt the ſenſe of the nation, and alſo againſt the wiſhes of the court; for the ariſtocracy oppoſed itſelf to both, and contented for privileges independent of either. The ſubject was then taken up by the parliament, who recommended that the number of the commons ſhould be equal to the other two; and that they ſhould all ſit in one houſe, and vote in one body. The number finally determined on was twelve hundred: Six hundred to be choſen by the commons (and this was leſs than their proportion ought to have been when their worth and conſequence is conſidered on a national ſcale) three hundred by the clergy, and three hundred by the ariſtocracy; but with reſpect to the mode of aſſembling themſelves, whether together or apart, or the manner in which they ſhould vote, thoſe matters were referred.*

* *Mr. Burke (and I muſt take the liberty of telling him he is very unacquainted with French affairs,) ſpeaking upon this ſubject, ſays, "The firſt thing that ſtruck me in the calling the ſtates-general, was a great departure from the ancient courſe;" and he ſoon after ſays, "From the*

The election that followed, was not a contested election, but an animated one. The candidates were not men, but principles. Societies were formed in Paris, and committees of correspondence and communication established throughout the nation, for the purpose of enlightening the people, and explaining to them the principles of civil government; and so orderly was the election conducted, that it did not give rise even to the rumour of tumult.

The states-general were to meet at Versailles in April, 1789, but did not assemble till May. They situated themselves in three separate chambers, or rather the clergy and the aristocracy withdrew each into a separate chamber. The majority of the aristocracy claimed what they called the privilege of voting as a separate body, and of giving their consent or their negative in that manner; and many of the bishops and the high benefited clergy claimed the same privilege on the part of their order.

The *tiers etat* (as they were then called) disowned any knowledge of artificial orders and artificial privileges; and they were not only resolute on this point but somewhat disdainful. They began to consider aristocracy as a kind of fungus growing out of the corrup-

moment I read the list, I saw distinctly, and very nearly as it has happened, all that was to follow." Mr. Burke certainly did not see all that was to follow. I have endeavoured to impress him, as well before as after the states-general met, that there would be a revolution; *but was not able to make him see it, neither would he believe it. How then he could distinctly see all the parts, when the whole was out of sight, is beyond my comprehension. And with respect to the "departure from the ancient "course," besides the natural weakness of the remark, it shews that he is unacquainted with circumstances. The departure was necessary, from the experience had upon it, that the ancient course was a bad one. The states-general of* 1614 *were called at the commencement of the civil war in the minority of Louis XIII: But by the clash of arranging them by orders, they increased the confusion they were called to compose. The author of* L'Intrigue du Cabinet *(Intrigue of the Cabinet), who wrote before any revolution was thought of in France, speaking of the states-general of* 1614, *says, "They held the public in suspense five months; and by the questions "agitated therein, and the heat with which they were put, it appears that "the great* (les grands) *thought more to satisfy their* particular *passions, "than to procure the good of the nation; and the whole time passed away "in altercations, ceremonies and parade." L'Intrigue du Cabinet, vol.* 1. *p.* 1. 329.

tion of ſociety, that could not be admitted even as a branch of it; and from the diſpoſition the ariſtocracy had ſhewn, by upholding lettres de cachet, and in ſundry other inſtances, it was manifeſt that no conſtitution could be formed by admitting men in any other character, than as national men.

After various altercations on this head, the tiers etat or commons (as they were then called) declared themſelves (on a motion made for that purpoſe by the abbe Sieyes) "THE REPRESENTATIVES "OF THE NATION; *and that the two orders could be conſidered but "as deputies of corporations, and could only have a deliberative voice but "when they aſſembled in a national character with the national repreſenta-"tives.*" This proceeding extinguiſhed the ſtyle of *etats generaux* or ſtates-general, and erected it into the ſtyle it now bears, that of l'aſſemble nationale or national aſſembly.

This motion was not made in a precipitate manner: It was the reſult of cool deliberation, and concerted between the national repreſentatives and the patriotic members of the two chambers, who ſaw into the folly, miſchief and injuſtice of artificial privileged diſtinctions. It was become evident, that no conſtitution, worthy of being called by that name, could be eſtabliſhed on any thing leſs than a national ground. The ariſtocracy had hitherto oppoſed the deſpotiſm of the court, and affected the language of patriotiſm; but it oppoſed it as its rival (as the Engliſh barons oppoſed king John); and it now oppoſed the nation from the ſame motives.

On carrying this motion, the national repreſentatives, as had been concerted, ſent an invitation to the two chambers, to unite with them in a national character, and proceed to buſineſs. A majority of the clergy, chiefly of the pariſh prieſts, withdrew from the clerical chamber, and joined the nation; and forty-five from the other chamber joined in like manner. There is a ſort of ſecret hiſtory belonging to this laſt circumſtance, which is neceſſary to its explanation: It was not judged prudent that all the patriotic members of the chamber, ſtyling itſelf the nobles, ſhould quit it at once; and in conſequence of this arrangement, they drew off by degrees, always leaving ſome, as well to reaſon the caſe, as to watch the ſuſpected. In a little time, the numbers increaſed from forty-five to eighty, and ſoon after to a greater number; which with a majority of the clergy, and the whole of the national repreſentatives put the mal-contents in a very diminutive condition.

The king, who, very different to the general claſs called by that name, is a man of a good heart, ſhewed himſelf diſpoſed to recom-

mend a union of the three chambers, on the ground the national aſſembly had taken; but the mal-contents exerted themſelves to prevent it, and began now to have another project in view. Their numbers conſiſted of a majority of the ariſtocratical chamber, and a minority of the clerical chamber, chiefly of biſhops and high-beneficed clergy; and theſe men were determined to put every thing to iſſue, as well by ſtrength as by ſtratagem. They had no objection to a conſtitution; but it muſt be ſuch an one as themſelves ſhould dictate, and ſuited to their own views and particular ſituations. On the other hand, the nation diſowned knowing any thing of them but as citizens, and was determined to ſhut out all ſuch upſtart pretenſions. The more ariſtocracy appeared, the more it was deſpiſed; there was a viſible imbecility and want of intellects in the majority, a ſort of *je ne ſais quoi*, that while it affected to be more than citizen, was leſs than man. It loſt ground from contempt more than from hatred; and was rather jeered at as an aſs, than dreaded as a lion. This is the general character of ariſtocracy, or what are called nobles or nobility, or rather no-ability, in all countries.

The plan of the mal-contents conſiſted now of two things; either to deliberate and vote by chambers (or orders), more eſpecially on all queſtions reſpecting a conſtitution (by which the ariſtocratical chamber would have had a negative on any article of the conſtitution) or, in caſe they could not accompliſh this object, to overthrow the national aſſembly entirely.

To affect one or other of theſe objects, they began now to cultivate a friendſhip with the deſpotiſm they had hitherto attempted to rival, and the count D'Artois became their chief. The king (who has ſince declared himſelf deceived into their meaſures) held, according to the old form, *a bed of juſtice*, in which he accorded to the deliberation and vote *par tête* (by head) upon ſeveral objects; but reſerved the deliberation and vote upon all queſtions reſpecting a conſtitution to the three chambers ſeparately. This declaration of the king was made againſt the advice of M. Neckar, who now began to perceive that he was growing out of faſhion at court, and that another miniſter was in contemplation.

As the form of ſitting in ſeparate chambers was yet apparently kept up, though eſſentially deſtroyed, the national repreſentatives, immediately after this declaration of the king, reſorted to their own chambers, to conſult on a proteſt againſt it; and the minority of the chamber (calling itſelf the nobles) who had joined the national cauſe, retired to a private houſe, to conſult in like manner. The mal-con-

tents had by this time concerted their measures with the court, which count D'Artois undertook to conduct: And as they saw, from the discontent which the declaration excited, and the opposition making against it, that they could not obtain a control over the intended constitution by a separate vote, they prepared themselves for their final object—that of conspiring against the national assembly, and overthrowing it.

The next morning, the door of the chamber of the national assembly was shut against them, and guarded by troops; and the members were refused admittance. On this, they withdrew to a tenis-ground in the neighbourhood of Versailles, as the most convenient place they could find, and, after renewing their session, took an oath never to separate from each other, under any circumstance whatever, death excepted, until they had established a constitution. As the experiment of shutting up the house had no other effect than that of producing a closer connexion in the members, it was opened again the next day, and the public business recommenced in the usual place.

We now are to have in view the forming of the new ministry, which was to accomplish the overthrow of the national assembly. But as force would be necessary, orders were issued to assemble thirty thousand troops, the command of which was given to Broglio, one of the new-intended ministry, who was recalled from the country for this purpose. But as some management was necessary to keep this plan concealed till the moment it should be ready for execution, it is to this policy that a declaration made by count D'Artois must be attributed, and which is here proper to be introduced.

It could not but occur, that while the mal-contents continued to resort to their chambers separate from the national assembly, that more jealousy would be excited than if they were mixed with it, and that the plot might be suspected. But as they had taken their ground, and now wanted a pretence for quitting it, it was necessary that one should be devised. This was effectually accomplished by a declaration made by count D'Artois, "*that if they took not a part "in the national assembly, the life of the king would be endangered;*" on which they quitted their chambers, and mixed with the assembly in one body.

At the time this declaration was made, it was generally treated as a piece of absurdity in count D'Artois, and calculated merely to relieve the outstanding members of the two chambers from the diminutive situation they were put in; and if nothing more had followed, this conclusion would have been good. But as things best

explain themſelves by their events, this apparent union was only a cover to the machinations that were ſecretly going on; and the declaration accommodated itſelf to anſwer that purpoſe. In a little time the national aſſembly found itſelf ſurrounded by troops, and thouſands daily arriving. On this a very ſtrong declaration was made by the national aſſembly to the king, remonſtrating on the impropriety of the meaſure, and demanding the reaſon. The king, who was not in the ſecret of this buſineſs, as himſelf afterwards declared, gave ſubſtantially for anſwer, that he had no other object in view than to preſerve public tranquility, which appeared to be much diſturbed.

But in a few days from this time, the plot unravelled itſelf. M. Neckar and the miniſtry were diſplaced, and a new one formed, of the enemies of the revolution; and Broglio, with between twenty-five and thirty thouſand foreign troops, was arrived to ſupport them. The maſk was now thrown off, and matters were come to a criſis. The event was, that in the ſpace of three days, the new miniſtry and their abettors found it prudent to fly the nation; the Baſtile was taken, and Broglio and his foreign troops diſperſed; as is already related in a former part of this work.

There are ſome curious circumſtance in the hiſtory of this ſhort-lived miniſtry, and this ſhort-lived attempt at a counter-revolution. The palace of Verſailles, where the court was ſitting, was not more than four hundred yards diſtant from the hall where the national aſſembly was ſitting. The two places were at this moment like the ſeparate head quarters of two combatant enemies; yet the court was as perfectly ignorant of the information which had arrived from Paris to the national aſſembly, as if it had reſided at an hundred miles diſtance. The then marquis de la Fayette, who (as has been already mentioned) was choſen to preſide in the national aſſembly on this particular occaſion, named, by order of the aſſembly, three ſucceſſive deputations to the king, on the day, and up to the evening on which the Baſtile was taken, to inform and confer with him on the ſtate of affairs: But the miniſtry, who knew not ſo much as that it was attacked, precluded all communication, and were ſolacing themſelves how dexterouſly they had ſucceeded; but in a few hours the accounts arrived ſo thick and faſt, that they had to ſtart from their deſks and run; ſome ſet off in one diſguiſe, and ſome in another, and none in their own character. Their anxiety now was to outride the news, leſt they ſhould be ſtopt, which, though it flew faſt, flew not ſo faſt as themſelves.

It is worth remarking, that the national aſſembly neither purſued thoſe fugitive conſpirators, nor took any notice of them, nor ſought to retaliate in any ſhape whatever. Occupied with eſtabliſhing a conſtitution founded on the Rights of Man and the authority of the people, the only authority on which government has a right to exiſt in any country, the national aſſembly felt none of thoſe mean paſſions which mark the character of impertinent governments, founding themſelves on their own authority, or on the abſurdity of hereditary ſucceſſion. It is the faculty of the human mind to become what it contemplates, and to act in uniſon with its object.

The conſpiracy being thus diſperſed, one of the firſt works of the national aſſembly, inſtead of vindictive proclamations, as has been the caſe with other governments, publiſhed a declaration of the Rights of Man as the baſis on which the new conſtitution was to be built, and which is here ſubjoined.

DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN AND OF CITIZENS.

BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF FRANCE.

" The repreſentatives of the people of France, formed into a national aſſembly, conſidering that ignorance, neglect, or contempt of human rights are the ſole cauſes of public misfortunes, and corruptions of government, have reſolved to ſet forth, in a ſolemn declaration, theſe natural, impreſcriptible, and unalienable rights: That this declaration being conſtantly preſent to the minds of the members of the body ſocial, they may be ever kept attentive to their rights and their duties: That the acts of the legiſlative and executive powers of government, being capable of being every moment compared with the end of political inſtitutions, may be more reſpected: And alſo, that the future claims of the citizens, being directed by ſimple and inconteſtible principles, may always tend to the maintenance of the conſtitution and the general happineſs.

" For theſe reaſons the national aſſembly doth recognize and declare, in the preſence of the Supreme Being, and with the hope of his bleſſing and favour, the following *ſacred* rights of men and of citizens:

" *I. Men are born and always continue free and equal in reſpect of* " *their rights. Civil diſtinctions, therefore, can be founded only on public* " *utility.*

" *II. The end of all political aſſociations is the preſervation of the* " *natural and imprescriptible rights of man; and theſe rights are liberty,* " *property, ſecurity, and reſiſtance of oppreſſion.*

" *III. The nation is eſſentially the ſource of all ſovereignty; nor can* " *any* INDIVIDUAL *or* ANY BODY OF MEN, *be entitled to* " *any authority which is not expreſſly derived from it.*

" IV. Political liberty conſiſts in the power of doing whatever does " not injure another. The exerciſe of the natural rights of every " man has no other limits than thoſe which are neceſſary to ſecure " to every *other* man the free exerciſe of the ſame rights; and theſe " limits are determinable only by the law.

" V. The law ought to prohibit only actions hurtful to ſociety. " What is not prohibited by the law, ſhould not be hindered; nor " ſhould any one be compelled to that which the law does not re- " quire.

" VI. The law is an expreſſion of the will of the community. All " citizens have a right to concur, either perſonally, or by their re- " preſentatives, in its formation. It ſhould be the ſame to all, whe- " ther it protects or puniſhes; and *all being equal in its ſight, are equally* " *eligible to all honours, places, and employments, according to their di-* " *ferent abilities, without any other diſtinction than that created by their* " *virtues and talents.*

" VII. No man ſhould be accuſed, arreſted, or held in confine- " ment, except in caſes determined by the law, and according to the " forms which it has preſcribed. All who promote, ſolicit, execute, " or cauſe to be executed, arbitrary orders, ought to be puniſhed; " and every citizen called upon or apprehended by virtue of the law, " ought immediately to obey, and not render himſelf culpable by " reſiſtance.

" VIII. The law ought to impoſe no other penalties than ſuch as " are abſolutely and evidently neceſſary: And no one ought to be " puniſhed, but in virtue of a law promulgated before the offence, " and legally applied.

" IX. Every man being preſumed innocent till he has been con- " victed, whenever his detention becomes indiſpenſible, all rigour to " him, more than is neceſſary to ſecure his perſon, ought to be pro- " vided againſt by the law.

" X. No man ought to be moleſted on account of his opi- " nions, not even on account of his *religious* opinions, provided his " avowal of them does not diſturb the public order eſtabliſhed by " law.

" XI. The unreſtrained communication of thoughts and opinions " being one of the moſt precious rights of man, every citizen may " ſpeak, write, and publiſh freely, provided he is reſponſible for the " abuſe of this liberty in caſes determined by the law.

" XII. A public force being neceſſary to give ſecurity to the " rights of men and of citizens, that force is inſtituted for the benefit " of the community, and not for the particular benefit of the perſons " with whom it is intruſted.

" XIII. A common contribution being neceſſary for the ſupport " of the public force, and for defraying the other expences of go- " vernment, it ought to be divided equally among the members of " the community, according to their abilities.

" XIV. Every citizen has a right, either by himſelf or his repre- " ſentative, to a free voice in determining the neceſſity of public con- " tributions, the appropriation of them, and their amount, mode of " aſſeſſment, and duration.

" XV. Every community has a right to demand of all its agents, " an account of their conduct.

" XVI. Every community in which a ſeparation of powers and a " ſecurity of rights is not provided for, wants a conſtitution.

" XVII. The right to property being inviolable and ſacred, no " one ought to be deprived of it, except in caſes of evident public " neceſſity legally aſcertained, and on condition of a previous juſt " idemnity.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.

The three firſt articles comprehend in general terms the whole of a declaration of rights: All the ſucceeding articles either originate out of them, or follow as elucidations. The 4th, 5th, and 6th, define more particularly what is only generally expreſſed in the 1ſt, 2d, and 3d.

The 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th articles are declaratory of *principles* upon which laws ſhall be conſtrued conformable to *rights* already declared. But it is queſtioned by ſome very good people in France, as well as in other countries, whether the 10th article ſufficiently guarantees the right it is intended to accord with: Beſides which, it takes off from the divine dignity of religion, and weakens its operative force upon the mind to make it a ſubject of human laws. It then preſents itſelf to man, like light intercepted by a cloudy me-

dium, in which the ſource of it is obſcured from his ſight, and he ſees nothing to reverence in the duſky rays.*

The remaining articles, beginning with the twelfth, are ſubſtantially contained in the principles of the preceding articles; but, in the particular ſituation which France then was, having to undo what was wrong, as well as to ſet up what was right, it was proper to be more particular than what in another condition of things would be neceſſary.

While the declaration of rights was before the national aſſembly, ſome of its members remarked, that if a declaration of rights was publiſhed, it ſhould be accompanied by a declaration of duties. The obſervation diſcovered a mind that reflected, and it only erred by not reflecting far enough. A declaration of rights is, by reciprocity, a declaration of duties alſo. Whatever is my right as a man, is alſo the right of another; and it becomes my duty to guarantee, as well as to poſſeſs.

The three firſt articles are the baſis of liberty as well individual as national; nor can any country be called free, whoſe government does not take its beginning from the principles they contain, and continue to preſerve them pure; and the whole of the declaration of rights is of more value to the world, and will do more good, than all the laws and ſtatutes that have yet been promulgated.

In the declaratory exordium which prefaces the declaration of

* *There is a ſingle idea, which, if it ſtrikes rightly upon the mind, either in a legal or a religious ſenſe, will prevent any man, or any body of men, or any government, from going wrong on the ſubject of religion; which is, that before any human inſtitutions of government were known in the world, there exiſted, if I may ſo expreſs it, a compact between God and man, from the beginning of time; and that as the relation and condition which man in his* individual perſon *ſtands in towards his maker cannot be changed, or any ways altered by any human laws or human authority, that religious devotion, which is a part of this compact, cannot ſo much as be made a ſubject of human laws; and that all laws muſt conform themſelves to this prior exiſting compact, and not aſſume to make the compact conform to the laws, which, beſides being human, are ſubſequent thereto. The firſt act of man, when he looked around and ſaw himſelf a creature which he did not make, and a world furniſhed for his reception, muſt have been devotion; and devotion muſt ever continue ſacred to every individual man,* as it appears right to him; *and governments do miſchief by interfering.*

rights, we ſee the ſolemn and majeſtic ſpectacle of a nation opening its commiſſion, under the auſpices of its creator, to eſtabliſh a government; a ſcene ſo new, and ſo tranſcendantly unequalled by any thing in the European world, that the name of a revolution is diminutive of its character, and it riſes into a regeneration of man. What are the preſent governments of Europe, but a ſcene of iniquity and oppreſſion? What is that of England? Does not its own inhabitants ſay, it is a market where every man has his price, and where corruption is common traffic, at the expence of a deluded people? No wonder, then, that the French revolution is traduced. Had it confined itſelf merely to the deſtruction of flagrant deſpotiſm, perhaps Mr. Burke and ſome others had been ſilent. Their cry now is, "It has "gone too far:" That is, it has gone too far for them. It ſtares corruption in the face, and the venal tribe are all alarmed. Their fear diſcovers itſelf in their outrage, and they are but publiſhing the groans of a wounded vice. But from ſuch oppoſition, the French revolution, inſtead of ſuffering, receives an homage. The more it is ſtruck, the more ſparks it will emit; and the fear is, it will not be ſtruck enough. It has nothing to dread from attacks. Truth has given it an eſtabliſhment; and time will record it with a name as laſting as its own.

Having now traced the progreſs of the French revolution through moſt of its principal ſtages, from its commencement to the taking of the Baſtile, and its eſtabliſhment by the declaration of rights, I will cloſe the ſubject with the energetic apoſtrophe of M. de la Fayette—*May this great monument raiſed to liberty, ſerve as a leſſon to the oppreſſor, and an example to the oppreſſed!**

MISCELLANEOUS CHAPTER.

To prevent interrupting the argument in the preceding part of this work, or the narrative that follows it, I reſerved ſome obſervations to be thrown together into a miſcellaneous chapter; by which variety might not be cenſured for confuſion. Mr. Burke's book is *all* miſcellany. His intention was to make an attack on the French revolution: But inſtead of proceeding with an orderly arrangement,

**See page 43 of this work.—N. B. Since the taking the Baſtile, the occurrences have been publiſhed; but the matters recorded in this narrative are prior to that period; and ſome of them, as may eaſily be ſeen, can be but very little known.*

he has ſtormed it with a mob of ideas, tumbling over and deſtroying one another.

But this confuſion and contradiction in Mr. Burk's book, is eaſily accounted for. When a man in a long cauſe attempts to ſteer his courſe by any thing elſe than ſome popular truth or principle, he is ſure to be loſt. It is beyond the compaſs of his capacity, to keep all the parts of an argument together, and make them unite in one iſſue, by any other means than having this guide always in view. Neither memory nor invention will ſupply the want of it. The former fails him, and the latter betrays him.

Notwithſtanding the nonſenſe, for it deſerves no better name, that Mr Burke has aſſerted about hereditary rights, and hereditary ſucceſſion, and that a nation has not a right to form a government for itſelf; it happened to fall in his way to give ſome account of what government is. "*Government*, ſays he, *is a contrivance of human wiſdom.*"

Admitting that government is a contrivance of human wiſdom, it muſt neceſſarily follow, that hereditary ſucceſſion, and hereditary rights (as they are called) can make no part of it, becauſe it is impoſſible to make wiſdom hereditary; and on the other hand, *that* cannot be a wiſe contrivance, which in its operation may commit the government of a nation to the wiſdom of an ideot. The ground which Mr. Burke now takes is fatal to every part of his cauſe. The argument changes from hereditary rights to hereditary wiſdom; and the queſtion is, Who is the wiſeſt man? He muſt now ſhew that every one in the line of hereditary ſucceſſion was a Solomon, or his title is not good to be a king. What a ſtroke has Mr. Burke now made! to uſe a ſailor's phraſe he has *ſwabbed the deck*, and ſcarcely left a name legible in the liſt of kings; and he has mowed down and thinned the houſe of peers, with a ſcythe as formidable as death and time.

But, Mr. Burke appears to have been aware of this retort, and he has taken care to guard againſt it, by making government to be not only a *contrivance* of human wiſdom, but a *monopoly* of wiſdom. He puts the nation as fools on one ſide, and places his government of wiſdom, all wiſe men of Gotham, on the other ſide; and he then proclaims, and ſays, that "*men have a* RIGHT *that their* WANTS *ſhould be provided for by this wiſdom.*" Having thus made proclamation, he next proceeds to explain to them what their *wants* are, and alſo what their *rights* are. In this he has ſucceeded dexterouſly, for he makes their wants to be a *want* of wiſdom; but as this is but cold

comfort, he then informs them, that they have a *right* (not to any of the wiſdom) but to be governed by it: And in order to impreſs them, with a ſolemn reverence for this monopoly-government of wiſdom, and of its vaſt capacity for all purpoſes, poſſible or impoſſible, right or wrong, he proceeds with aſtrological myſterious importance, to tell to them its powers in theſe words—"The rights of man in "government are their advantages; and theſe are often in balances "between differences of good; and in compromiſes ſometimes be- "tween *good* and *evil*, and ſometimes between *evil* and *evil*. Poli- "tical reaſon is a *computing principle*; adding, ſubtracting, multiply- "ing, and dividing, morally and not metaphyſically or mathemati- "cally, true moral demonſtrations."

As the wondering audience whom Mr. Burke ſuppoſes himſelf talking to, may not underſtand all this jargon, I will undertake to be its interpreter. The meaning then, good people, of all this is, *That government is governed by no principle whatever: That it can make evil good, or good evil, juſt as it pleaſes. In ſhort, that government is arbitrary power.*

But there are ſome things which Mr. Burke has forgotten, *Firſt*, he has not ſhewn where the wiſdom originally came from: And *ſecondly*, he has not ſhewn by what authority it firſt began to act. In the manner he introduced the matter, it is either government ſtealing wiſdom, or wiſdom ſtealing government. It is without an origin, and its powers without authority. In ſhort, it is uſurpation.

Whether it be from a ſenſe of ſhame, or from a conſciouſneſs of ſome radical defect in government neceſſary to be kept out of ſight, or from both, or from any other cauſe, I undertake not to determine; but ſo it is, that a monarchical reaſoner never traces government to its ſource, or from its ſource. It is one of the *ſhibboleths* by which he may be known. A thouſand years hence, thoſe who ſhall live in America or in France will look back with contemplative pride on the origin of their governments, and ſay, *This was the work of our glorious anceſtors!* But what can a monarchical talker ſay? What has he to exult in? Alas! he has nothing. A certain ſomething forbids him to look back to a beginning, leſt ſome robber or ſome Robin Hood ſhould riſe from the long obſcurity of time, and ſay, *I am the origin.* Hard as Mr. Burke laboured under the regency bill and hereditary ſucceſſion two years ago, and much as he dived for precedents, he ſtill had not boldneſs enough to bring up William of Normandy, and ſay, *There is the head of the line, there is the fountain*

of honour, the ſon of a proſtitute, and the plunderer of the Engliſh nation.

The opinions of men with reſpect to government, are changing faſt in all countries. The revolutions of America and France have thrown a beam of light over the world, which reaches into man. The enormous expence of governments have provoked people to think by making them feel: And when once the veil begins to rend, it admits not of repair. Ignorance is of a peculiar nature: Once diſpelled, it is impoſſible to re-eſtabliſh it. It is not originally a thing of itſelf, but is only the abſence of knowledge; and though man may be *kept* ignorant, he cannot be *made* ignorant. The mind, in diſcovering truth, acts in the ſame manner as it acts through the eye in diſcovering an object; when once any object has been ſeen, it is impoſſible to put the mind back to the ſame condition it was in before it ſaw it. Thoſe who talk of a counter-revolution in France, ſhew how little they underſtand of man. There does not exiſt in the compaſs of language, an arrangement of words to expreſs ſo much as the means of effecting a counter-revolution. The means muſt be an obliteration of knowledge; and it has never yet been diſcovered, how to make man *unknow* his knowledge, or *unthink* his thoughts.

Mr. Burke is labouring in vain to ſtop the progreſs of knowledge; and it comes with the worſe grace from him, as there is a certain tranſaction known in the city, which renders him ſuſpected of being a penſioner in a fictitious name. This may account for ſome ſtrange doctrine he has advanced in his book, which, though he points it at the revolution ſociety, is effectually directed againſt the whole nation.

"The king of England," ſays he, "holds *his* crown (for it does "not belong to the nation, according to Mr. Burke) in *contempt* of "the choice of the revolution ſociety, who have not a ſingle vote for "a king among them either *individually* or *collectively*; and his ma-"jeſty's heirs, each in their time and order, will come to the crown "*with the ſame contempt* of their choice, with which his majeſty has "ſucceeded to that which he now wears."

As to who is king in England or elſewhere, or whether there is any at all, or whether the people chooſe a Cherokee chief, or a Heſſian huſſar for a king, is not a matter that I trouble myſelf about, be that to themſelves; but with reſpect to the doctrine, ſo far as it relates to the rights of men and nations, it is as abominable as any thing ever uttered in the moſt enſlaved country under heaven. Whether it

ſounds worſe to my ear, by not being accuſtomed to hear ſuch deſpotiſm, than what it does to the ear of another perſon, I am not ſo well a judge of; but of its abominable principle, I am at no loſs to judge.

It is not the revolution ſociety that Mr. Burke means; it is the nation, as well in its *original*, as in its *repreſentative* character; and he has taken care to make himſelf underſtood, by ſaying that they have not a vote either *collectively* or *individually*. The revolution ſociety is compoſed of citizens of all denominations, and of members of both houſes of parliament, and conſequently, if there is not a right to vote in any of the characters, there can be no right to any, either in the nation or in its parliament. This ought to be a caution to every country, how it imports foreign families to be kings. It is ſomewhat curious to obſerve that although the people of England have been in the habit of talking about kings, it is always a foreign houſe of kings; hating foreigners yet governed by them. It is now the houſe of Brunſwick, one of the petty tribes of Germany.

It has hitherto been the practice of the Engliſh parliaments, to regulate what was called the ſucceſſion, (taking it for granted, that the nation then continued to accord to the form of annexing a monarchical branch to its government; for without this, the parliament could not have had authority to have ſent either to Holland or to Hanover, or to impoſe a king upon the nation againſt its will). And this muſt be the utmoſt limit to which parliament can go upon the caſe; but the right of the nation goes to the *whole* caſe, becauſe it has the right of changing its *whole* form of government. The right of a parliament is only a right in truſt, a right by delegation, and that but from a very ſmall part of the nation; and one of its houſes has not even this. But the right of the nation is an original right, as univerſal as taxation. The nation is the paymaſter of every thing, and every thing muſt conform to its general will.

I remember taking notice of a ſpeech in what is called the Engliſh houſe of peers, by the then earl of Shelburne, and I think it was at the time he was miniſter, which is applicable to this caſe. I do not directly charge my memory with every particular; but the words and the purport as nearly as I remember, were theſe: *That the form of a government was a matter wholly at the will of a nation at all times; that if it choſe a monarchical form, it had a right to have it ſo, and if it afterwards choſe to be a republic, it had a right to be a republic, and to ſay to a king, we have no longer any occaſion for you.*

When Mr. Burke ſays that "his majeſty's heirs and ſucceſſors,

" each in their time and order, will come to the crown with the " ſame *contempt* of their choice with which his majeſty has ſucceeded " to that he wears," it is ſaying too much even to the humbleſt individual in the country; part of whoſe daily labour goes towards making up the million ſterling a-year, which the country gives a perſon it ſtyles a king. Government with inſolence, is deſpotiſm; but when contempt is added, it becomes worſe; and to pay for contempt, is the exceſs of ſlavery. This ſpecies of government comes from Germany; and reminds me of what one of the Brunſwick ſoldiers told me, who was taken priſoner by the Americans in the late war; " Ah!" ſaid he, " America is a fine free country, it is worth people's " fighting for; I know the difference by knowing my own: in my " country, if the prince ſay, eat ſtraw, we eat ſtraw."—God help that country, thought I, be it England or elſewhere, whoſe liberties are to be protected by German principles of government and princes of Brunſwick.

As Mr. Burke ſometimes ſpeaks of England, ſometimes of France, and ſometimes of the world, and of government in general, it is difficult to anſwer his book without apparently meeting him on the ſame ground. Although principles of government are general ſubjects, it is next to impoſſible in many caſes to ſeparate them from the idea of place and circumſtance; and the more ſo when circumſtances are put for arguments, which is frequently the caſe with Mr. Burke.

In the former part of his book, addreſſing himſelf to the people of France, he ſays, " No experience has taught us, (meaning the Eng- " liſh), that in any other courſe or method than that of an *hereditary* " *crown*, can our liberties be regularly perpetuated and preſerved " ſacred as our *hereditary right*." I aſk Mr. Burke who is to take them away? M. de la Fayette, in ſpeaking to France, ſays, " *For a* " *nation to be free it is ſufficient that ſhe wills it.*" But Mr. Burke repreſents England as wanting capacity to take care of itſelf; and that its liberties muſt be taken care of by a king, holding it in " con- " tempt." If England is ſunk to this, it is preparing itſelf to eat ſtraw, as in Hanover or in Brunſwick. But beſides the folly of the declaration, it happens that the facts are all againſt Mr. Burke. It was by the government *being hereditary*, that the liberties of the people were endangered. Charles the firſt, and James the ſecond, are inſtances of this truth; yet neither of them went ſo far as to hold the nation in contempt.

As it is ſometimes of advantage to the people of one country, to

hear what thoſe of other countries have to ſay reſpecting it, it is poſſible that the people of France may learn ſomething from Mr. Burke's book, and that the people of England may alſo learn ſomething from the anſwers it will occaſion. When nations fall out about freedom, a wide field of debate is opened. The argument commences with the rights of war, without its evils; and as knowledge is the object contended for, the party that ſuſtains the defeat obtains the prize.

Mr. Burke talks about what he calls an hereditary crown, as if it were ſome production of nature; or as if, like time, it had a power to operate not only independent, but in ſpite of man; or as if it were a thing or a ſubject univerſally conſented to. Alas! it has none of thoſe properties, but is the reverſe of them all. It is a thing in imagination, the propriety of which is more than doubted, and the legality of which in a few years will be denied.

But, to arrange this matter in a clearer view than what general expreſſions can convey, it will be neceſſary to ſtate the diſtinct heads under which (what is called) an hereditary crown, or, more properly ſpeaking, an hereditary ſucceſſion to the government of a nation, can be conſidered; which are,

Firſt, The right of a particular family to eſtabliſh itſelf.

Secondly, The right of a nation to eſtabliſh a particular family.

With reſpect to the *firſt* of theſe heads, that of a family eſtabliſhing itſelf with hereditary powers on its own authority, and independent of the conſent of a nation, all men will concur in calling it deſpotiſm; and it would be treſpaſſing on their underſtanding to attempt to prove it.

But the *ſecond* head, that of a nation eſtabliſhing a particular family with *hereditary powers*, does not preſent itſelf as deſpotiſm on the firſt reflection; but if men will permit a ſecond reflection to take place, and carry that reflection forward but one remove out of their own perſons to that of their offſpring, they will then ſee that hereditary ſucceſſion becomes in its conſequences the ſame deſpotiſm to others, which they reprobated for themſelves. It operates to preclude the conſent of the ſucceeding generation, and the preclufion of conſent is deſpotiſm. When the perſon who at any time ſhall be in poſſeſſion of a government, or thoſe who ſtand in ſucceſſion to him, ſhall ſay to a nation, I hold this power in "contempt" of you, it ſignifies not on what authority he pretends to ſay it. It is no relief, but an aggravation to a perſon in ſlavery, to reflect that he was ſold by his parent; and as that which heightens the criminality of an act

cannot be produced to prove the legality of it, hereditary ſucceſſion cannot be eſtabliſhed as a legal thing.

In order to arrive at a more perfect deciſion on this head, it will be proper to conſider the generation which undertakes to eſtabliſh a family with *hereditary powers*, a-part and ſeparate from the generations which are to follow; and alſo to conſider the character in which the *firſt* generation acts with reſpect to ſucceeding generations.

The generation which firſt ſelects a perſon, and puts him at the head of its government, either with the title of king, or any other diſtinction, acts its *own choice*, be it wiſe or fooliſh, as a free agent for itſelf. The perſon ſo ſet up is not hereditary, but ſelected and appointed; and the generation who ſets him up, does not live under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice and eſtabliſhment. Were the generation who ſets him up, and the perſon ſo ſet up, to live for ever, it never could become hereditary ſucceſſion; hereditary ſucceſſion can only follow on death of the firſt parties.

As therefore hereditary ſucceſſion is out of the queſtion with reſpect to the *firſt* generation, we have now to conſider the character in which *that* generation acts with reſpect to the commencing generation, and to all ſucceeding ones.

It aſſumes a character, to which it has neither right nor title. It changes itſelf from a *legiſlator* to a *teſtator*, and affects to make its will, which is to have operation after the demiſe of the makers, to bequeath the government; and it not only attempts to bequeath, but to eſtabliſh on the ſucceeding generation, a new and different form of government under which itſelf lived. Itſelf, as is already obſerved, lived not under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice and eſtabliſhment; and it now attempts, by virtue of a will and teſtament (and which it has not authority to make) to take from the commencing generation, and all future ones, the rights and free agency by which itſelf acted.

But, excluſive of the right which any generation has to act collectively as a teſtator, the objects to which it applies itſelf in this caſe, are not within the compaſs of any law, or of any will or teſtament.

The rights of men in ſociety, are neither deviſable, nor transferable, nor annihilable but are deſcendable only; and it is not in the power of any generation to intercept finally, and cut off the deſcent. If the preſent generation, or any other, are diſpoſed to be ſlaves, it does not leſſen the right of the ſucceeding generation to be free: Wrongs cannot have a legal deſcent. When Mr. Burke attempts to

maintain, that the *Engliſh nation did at the revolution of* 1688 *moſt ſolemnly renounce and abdicate their rights for themſelves, and for all their poſterity for ever*, he ſpeaks a language that merits not reply, and which can only excite contempt for his proſtitute principles, or pity for his ignorance.

In whatever light hereditary ſucceſſion, as growing out of the will and teſtament of ſome former generation, preſents itſelf, it is an abſurdity. A cannot make a will to take from B the property of B, and give it to C; yet this is the manner in which (what is called) hereditary ſucceſſion by law, operates. A certain former generation made a will to take away the rights of the commencing generation and all future ones, and convey thoſe rights to a third perſon, who afterwards comes forward, and tells them, in Mr. Burke's language, that they have *no rights*, that their rights are already bequeathed to him, and that he will govern in *contempt* of them. From ſuch principles, and ſuch ignorance, good Lord deliver the world!

But, after all, what is this metaphor called a crown, or rather, what is monarchy? Is it a thing, or is it a name, or is it a fraud? Is it "a contrivance of human wiſdom," or of human craft, to obtain money from a nation under ſpecious pretences? Is it a thing neceſſary to a nation? If it is, in what does that neceſſity conſiſt, what ſervice does it perform, what is its buſineſs, and what are its merits? Doth the virtue conſiſt in the metaphor, or in the man? Doth the goldſmith that makes the crown, make the virtue alſo? Doth it operate like Fortunatus's wiſhing cap, or Harlequin's wooden ſword? Doth it make a man a conjuror? In fine, what is it? It appears to be a ſomething going much out of faſhion, falling into ridicule, and rejected in ſome countries both as unneceſſary and expenſive. In America it is conſidered as an abſurdity, and in France it has ſo far declined, that the goodneſs of the man, and the reſpect for his perſonal character, are the only things that preſerve the appearance of its exiſtence.

If government be what Mr. Burke deſcribes it, "a contrivance of human wiſdom," I might aſk him, if wiſdom was at ſuch a low ebb in England, that it was become neceſſary to import it from Holland and from Hanover? But I will do the country the juſtice to ſay, that was not the caſe; and even if it was, it miſtook the cargo. The wiſdom of every country, when properly exerted, is ſufficient for all its purpoſes: and there could exiſt no more real occaſion in England to have ſent for a Dutch ſtadtholder, or a German elector, than there was in America to have done a ſimilar thing. If a country does not

underſtand its own affairs, how is a foreigner to underſtand them, who knows neither its laws, its manners, nor its language? If there exiſted a man ſo tranſcendantly wiſe above all others, that his wiſdom was neceſſary to inſtruct a nation, ſome reaſon might be offered for monarchy; but when we caſt our eyes about a country, and obſerve how every part underſtands its own affairs; and when we look around the world, and ſee that of all men in it, the race of kings are the moſt inſignificant in capacity; our reaſon cannot fail to aſk us—What are thoſe men kept for?

If there is any thing in monarchy which we people of America do not underſtand, I wiſh Mr. Burke would be ſo kind as to inform us. I ſee in America, a government extending over a country ten times as large as England, and conducted with regularity for a fortieth part of the expence which government coſts in England. If I aſk a man in America, if he wants a king? he retorts, and aſks me if I take him for an ideot? How is it that this difference happens? are we more or leſs wiſe than others? I ſee in America, the generality of people living in a ſtyle of plenty unknown in monarchical countries; and I ſee that the principle of its government, which is that of the *equal rights of man*, is making a rapid progreſs in the world.

If monarchy is a uſeleſs thing, why is it kept up any where? and if a neceſſary thing, how can it be diſpenſed with? That *civil government* is neceſſary, all civilized nations will agree in; but civil government is republican government. All that part of the government of England which begins with the office of conſtable, and proceeds through the department of magiſtrate, quarter-ſeſſion, and general aſſize, including trial by jury, is republican government. Nothing of monarchy appears in any part of it, except the name which William the conqueror impoſed upon the Engliſh, that of obliging them to call him "Their ſovereign lord the king."

It is eaſy to conceive, that a band of intereſted men, ſuch as placemen, penſioners, lords of the bed-chamber, lords of the kitchen, lords of the neceſſary-houſe, and the Lord knows what beſides, can find as many reaſons for monarchy as their ſalaries, paid at the expence of the country, amount to; but if I aſk the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradeſman, and down through all the occupations of life to the common labourer, what ſervice monarchy is to him? he can give me no anſwer. If I aſk him what monarchy is, he believes it is ſomething like a ſinecure.

Notwithſtanding the taxes of England amount to almoſt ſeventeen millions a-year, ſaid to be for the expences of government, it is ſtill

evident that the ſenſe of the nation is left to govern itſelf, and does govern itſelf by magiſtrates and juries, almoſt at its own charge, on republican principles, excluſive of the expence of taxes. The ſalaries of the judges are almoſt the only charge that is paid out of the revenue. Conſidering that all the internal government is executed by the people, the taxes of England ought to be lighteſt of any nation in Europe; inſtead of which, they are the contrary. As this cannot be accounted for on the ſcore of civil government, the ſubject neceſſarily extends itſelf to the monarchical part.

When the people of England ſent for George the firſt (and it would puzzle a wiſer man than Mr. Burke to diſcover for what he could be wanted, or what ſervice he could render), they ought at leaſt to have conditioned for the abandonment of Hanover. Beſides the endleſs German intrigues that muſt follow from a German elector being king of England, there is a natural impoſſibility of uniting in the ſame perſon the principles of freedom and the principles of deſpotiſm, or as it is called in England, arbitrary power. A German elector is in his electorate a deſpot: How then could it be expected that he ſhould be attached to principles of liberty in one country, while his intereſt in another was to be ſupported by deſpotiſm? The union cannot exiſt: and it might eaſily have been foreſeen, that German electors would make German kings, or, in Mr. Burke's words, would aſſume government with "contempt." The Engliſh have been in the habit of conſidering a king of England only in the character in which he appears to them: Whereas the ſame perſon, while the connection laſts, has a home-ſeat in another country, the intereſt of which is different to their own, and the principles of the government in oppoſition to each other—To ſuch a perſon England will appear as a town-reſidence, and the electorate as the eſtate. The Engliſh may wiſh, as I believe they do, ſucceſs to the principles of liberty in France, or in Germany; but a German elector trembles for the fate of deſpotiſm in his electorate; and the duchy of Mecklenburgh, where the preſent queen's family governs, is under the ſame wretched ſtate of arbitrary power, and the people in ſlaviſh vaſſalage.

There never was a time when it became the Engliſh to watch continental intrigues more circumſpectly than at the preſent moment, and to diſtinguiſh the politics of the electorate from the politics of the nation. The revolution of France has entirely changed the ground with reſpect to England and France, as nations: but the German deſpots, with Pruſſia at their head, are combining againſt

liberty; and the fondneſs of Mr. Pitt for office, and the intereſt which all his family connections have obtained, do not give ſufficient ſecurity againſt this intrigue.

As every thing which paſſes in the world becomes matter for hiſtory, I will now quit this ſubject, and take a conciſe review of the ſtate of parties and politics in England, as Mr. Burke has done in France.

Whether the preſent reign commenced with contempt, I leave to Mr. Burke: Certain however it is, that it had ſtrongly that appearance. The animoſity of the Engliſh nation, it is very well remembered, ran high; and, had the true principles of liberty been as well underſtood then as they now promiſe to be, it is probable the nation would not have patiently ſubmitted to ſo much. George the firſt and ſecond were ſenſible of a rival in the remains of the Stuarts; and as they could not but conſider themſelves as ſtanding on their good behaviour, they had prudence to keep their German principles of government to themſelves; but as the Stuart family wore away, the prudence became leſs neceſſary.

The conteſt between rights, and what were called prerogatives, continued to heat the nation till ſome time after the concluſion of the American war, when all at once it fell a calm; execration exchanged itſelf for applauſe, and court popularity ſprung up like a muſhroom in the night.

To account for this ſudden tranſition, it is proper to obſerve, that there are two diſtinct ſpecies of popularity; the one excited by merit, the other by reſentment. As the nation had formed itſelf into two parties, and each was extolling the merits of its parliamentary champions for and againſt the prerogative, nothing could operate to give a more general ſhock than an immediate coalition of the champions themſelves. The partiſans of each being thus ſuddenly left in the lurch, and mutually heated with diſguſt at the meaſure, felt no other relief than uniting in a common execration againſt both. A higher ſtimulus of reſentment being thus excited, than what the conteſt on prerogatives had occaſioned, the nation quitted all former objects of rights and wrongs, and fought only that of gratification. The indignation at the coalition, ſo effectually ſuperſeded the indignation againſt the court, as to extinguiſh it; and without any change of principles on the part of the court, the ſame people who had reprobated its deſpotiſm, united with it, to revenge themſelves on the coalition parliament. The caſe was not, which they liked beſt—but, which they hated moſt; and the leaſt hated paſſed for love. The

diſſolution of the coalition parliament, as it afforded the means of gratifying the reſentment of the nation, could not fail to be popular; and from hence aroſe the popularity of the court.

Tranſitions of this kind exhibit a nation under the government of temper, inſtead of a fixed and ſteady principle: And having once committed itſelf, however raſhly, it feels itſelf urged along to juſtify by continuance its firſt proceeding. Meaſures which at other times it would cenſure, it now approves, and acts perſuaſion upon itſelf to ſuffocate its judgment.

On the return of a new parliament, the new miniſter, Mr. Pitt, found himſelf in a ſecure majority: And the nation gave him credit, not out of regard to himſelf, but becauſe it had reſolved to do it out of reſentment to another. He introduced himſelf to public notice by a propoſed reform of parliament, which in its operation would have amounted to a public juſtification of corruption. The nation was to be at the expence of buying up the rotten boroughs, whereas it ought to puniſh the perſons who deal in the traffic.

Paſſing over the two bubbles, of the Dutch buſineſs, and the million a-year to ſink the national debt, the matter which moſt preſents itſelf, is the affair of the regency. Never in the courſe of my obſervation, was deluſion more ſucceſsfully acted, nor a nation more completely deceived. But, to make this appear, it will be neceſſary to go over the circumſtances.

Mr. Fox had ſtated in the houſe of commons, that the prince of Wales, as heir in ſucceſſion, had a right in himſelf to aſſume the government. This was oppoſed by Mr. Pitt; and, ſo far as the oppoſition was confined to the doctrine, it was juſt. But the principles which Mr. Pitt maintained on the contrary ſide, were as bad, or worſe in their extent, than thoſe of Mr. Fox; becauſe they went to eſtabliſh an ariſtocracy over the nation, and over the ſmall repreſentation it has in the houſe of commons.

Whether the Engliſh form of government be good or bad, is not in this caſe the queſtion; but, taking it as it ſtands, without regard to its merits or demerits, Mr. Pitt was farther from the point than Mr. Fox.

It is ſuppoſed to conſiſt of three parts; while, therefore, the nation is diſpoſed to continue this form, the parts have a *national ſtanding*, independent of each other, and are not the creatures of each other. Had Mr. Fox paſſed through parliament, and ſaid, that the perſon alluded to claimed on the ground of the nation, Mr. Pitt muſt then

have contended (what he called) the right of the parliament, againſt the right of the nation.

By the appearance which the conteſt made, Mr. Fox took the hereditary ground; and Mr. Pitt the parliamentary ground, but the fact is, they both took hereditary ground, and Mr. Pitt took the worſt of the two.

What is called the parliament, is made up of two houſes; one of which is more hereditary, and more beyond the control of the nation, than what the crown (as it is called) is ſuppoſed to be. It is an hereditary ariſtocracy, aſſuming and aſſerting indefeaſible, irrevocable rights and authority, wholly independent of the nation. Where then was the merited popularity of exalting this hereditary power over another hereditary power leſs independent of the nation than what itſelf aſſumed to be, and of abſorbing the rights of the nation into a houſe over which it has neither election nor control?

The general impulſe of the nation was right; but it acted without reflection. It approved the oppoſition made to the right ſet up by Mr. Fox, without perceiving that Mr. Pitt was ſupporting another indefeaſible right more remote from the nation, in oppoſition to it.

With reſpect to the houſe of commons, it is elected but by a ſmall part of the nation; but were the election as univerſal as taxation, which it ought to be, it would ſtill be only the organ of the nation, and cannot poſſeſs inherent rights. When the national aſſembly of France reſolves a matter, the reſolve is made in right of the nation; but Mr. Pitt, on all national queſtions, ſo far as they refer to the houſe of commons, abſorbs the rights of the nation into the organ, and makes the organ into a nation, and the nation itſelf into a cypher.

In a few words, the queſtion on the regency was a queſtion on a million a-year, which is appropriated to the executive department: And Mr. Pitt could not poſſeſs himſelf of any management of this ſum, without ſetting up the ſupremacy of parliament; and when this was accompliſhed, it was indifferent who ſhould be regent as he muſt be regent at his own coſt. Among the curioſities which this contentious debate afforded, was that of making the great ſeal into a king; the affixing of which to an act, was to be royal authority. If, therefore, royal authority is a great ſeal, it conſequently is in itſelf nothing; and a good conſtitution would be of infinitely more value to the nation, than what the three nominal powers, as they now ſtand are worth.

The continual uſe of the word *conſtitution* in the Engliſh parliament, ſhews there is none; and that the whole is merely a form of

government without a conſtitution, and conſtituting itſelf with what powers it pleaſes. If there were a conſtitution, it certainly would be referred to; and the debate on any conſtitutional point, would terminate by producing the conſtitution. One member ſays, This is conſtitution? another ſays, That is conſtitution—To-day it is one thing; and to-morrow, it is ſomething elſe—while the maintaining the debate proves there is none. Conſtitution is now the cant word of parliament, turning itſelf to the ear of the nation. Formerly it was the *univerſal ſupremacy of parliament—the omnipotence of parliament.* But, ſince the progreſs of liberty in France, thoſe phraſes have a deſpotic harſhneſs in their note; and the Engliſh parliament have catched the faſhion from the national aſſembly, but without the ſubſtance, of ſpeaking of *conſtitution.*

As the preſent generation of people in England did not make the government, they are not accountable for any of its defects; but that ſooner or later it muſt come into their hands to undergo a conſtitutional reformation, is as certain as that the ſame thing has happened in France. If France, with a revenue of nearly twenty-four millions ſterling, with an extent of rich and fertile country above four times larger than England, with a population of twenty-four millions of inhabitants to ſupport taxation, with upwards of ninety millions ſterling of gold and ſilver circulating in the nation, and with a debt leſs than the preſent debt of England—ſtill found it neceſſary, from whatever cauſe, to come to a ſettlement of its affairs, it ſolves the problem of funding for both countries.

It is out of the queſtion to ſay how long, what is called the Engliſh conſtitution has laſted, and to argue from thence how long it is to laſt; the queſtion is, how long can the funding ſyſtem laſt? It is a thing but of modern invention, and has not yet continued beyond the life of a man; yet in that ſhort ſpace it has ſo far accumulated, that, together with the current expences, it requires an amount of taxes at leaſt equal to the whole landed rental of the nation in acres, to defray the annual expenditures. That a government could not always have gone on by the ſame ſyſtem which has been followed for the laſt ſeventy years, muſt be evident to every man; and for the ſame reaſon it cannot always go on.

The funding ſyſtem is not money; neither is it, properly ſpeaking, credit. It in effect, creates upon paper the ſum which it appears to borrow, and lays on a tax to keep the imaginary capital alive by the payment of intereſt, and ſends the annuity to market, to be ſold for paper already in circulation. If any credit is given, it is to

the diſpoſition of the people to pay the tax, and not to the government which lays it on. When this diſpoſition expires, what is ſuppoſed to be the credit of government expires with it. The inſtance of France under the former government ſhews that it is impoſſible to compel the payment of taxes by force, when a whole nation is determined to take its ſtand upon that ground.

Mr. Burke, in his review of the finances of France, ſtates the quantity of gold and ſilver in France, at about eighty-eight millions ſterling. In doing this he has, I preſume, divided by the difference of exchange, inſtead of the ſtandard of twenty-four livres to a pound ſterling; for M. Neckar's ſtatement, from which Mr. Burke's is taken, is *two thouſand two hundred millions of livres*, which is upwards of ninety one millions and an half ſterling.

M. Neckar in France, and Mr. George Chalmers of the office of trade and plantation in England, of which lord Hawkeſbury is preſident, publiſhed nearly about the ſame time (1786) an account of the quantity of money in each nation, from the returns of the mint of each nation. Mr. Chalmers from the returns of the Engliſh mint at the Tower of London, ſtates the quantity of money in England, including Scotland and Ireland, to be twenty millions ſterling.*

M. Neckar† ſays, that the amount of money in France, recoined from the old coin which was called in, was two thouſand five hundred millions of livres (upwards of one hundred and four millions ſterling), and, after deducting for waſte, and what may be in the Weſt-Indies, and other poſſible circumſtances, ſtates the circulating quantity at home, to be ninety-one millions and an half ſterling; but, taking it as Mr. Burke has put it, it is ſixty-eight millions more than the national quantity in England.

That the quantity of money in France cannot be under this ſum, may at once be ſeen from the ſtate of the French revenue, without referring to the records of the French mint for proofs. The revenue of France prior to the revolution, was nearly twenty-four millions ſterling; and as paper had then no exiſtence in France, the whole revenue was collected upon gold and ſilver; and it would have been impoſſible to have collected ſuch a quantity of revenue upon a leſs national quantity than M. Neckar has ſtated, Before the eſtabliſh-

* *See Eſtimate of the Comparative Strength of Great Britain, by G. Chalmers.*

† *See Adminiſtration of the Finances of France, Vol. III. by M. Neckar.*

ment of paper in England, the revenue was about a fourth part of the national amount of gold and ſilver, as may be known by referring to the revenue prior to king William, and the quantity of money ſtated to be in the nation at that time, which was nearly as much as it is now.

It can be of no real ſervice to a nation, to impoſe upon itſelf, or to permit itſelf to be impoſed upon; but the prejudices of ſome, and the impoſition of others, have always repreſented France as a nation poſſeſſing but little money—whereas the quantity is not only more than four times what the quantity is in England, but is conſiderably greater on a proportion of numbers. To account for this deficiency on the part of England, ſome reference ſhould be had to the Engliſh ſyſtem of funding. It operates to multiply paper, and to ſubſtitute it in the room of money, in various ſhapes; and the more paper is multiplied, the more opportunities are afforded to export the ſpecie; and it admits of a poſſibility (by extending it to ſmall notes) of increaſing paper, till there is no money left.

I know this is not a pleaſant ſubject to Engliſh readers; but the matters I am going to mention, are ſo important in themſelves, as to require the attention of men intereſted in money-tranſactions of a public nature. There is a circumſtance ſtated by M. Neckar, in his treatiſe on the adminiſtration of the finances, which has never been attended to in England, but which forms the only baſis whereon to eſtimate the quantity of money (gold and ſilver) which ought to be in every nation in Europe, to preſerve a relative proportion with other nations.

Liſbon and Cadiz are the two ports into which (money) gold and ſilver from South America are imported, and which afterwards divides and ſpreads itſelf over Europe by means of commerce, and increaſes the quantity of money in all parts of Europe. If, therefore, the amount of the annual importation into Europe can be known, and the relative proportion of the foreign commerce of the ſeveral nations by which it is diſtributed can be aſcertained, they give a rule, ſufficiently true, to aſcertain the quantity of money which ought to be found in any nation at any given time.

M. Neckar ſhews from the regiſters of Liſbon and Cadiz, that the importation of gold and ſilver into Europe, is five millions ſterling annually. He has not taken it on a ſingle year, but on an average of fifteen ſucceeding years, from 1763 to 1777, both inclusive; in which time, the amount was one thouſand eight hundred million livres, which is ſeventy-five millions ſterling.*

* *Adminiſtration of the Finances of France, Vol. III.*

From the commencement of the Hanover ſucceſſion in 1714, to the time Mr. Chalmers publiſhed, is ſeventy two years; and the quantity imported into Europe, in that time, would be three hundred and ſixty millions ſterling.

If the foreign commerce of Great Britain be ſtated at a ſixth part of what the whole foreign commerce of Europe amounts to (which is probably an inferior eſtimation to what the gentlemen at the exchange would allow) the proportion which Britain ſhould draw by commerce of this ſum, to keep herſelf on a proportion with the reſt of Europe, would be alſo a ſixth part, which is ſixty millions ſterling; and if the ſame allowance for waſte and accident be made for England, which M. Neckar makes for France, the quantity remaining after theſe deductions, would be fifty-two millions, and this ſum ought to have been in the nation (at the time Mr. Chalmers publiſhed) in addition to the ſum which was in the nation at the commencement of the Hanover ſucceſſion, and to have made in the whole at leaſt ſixty-ſix millions ſterling; inſtead of which there were but twenty millions, which is forty-ſix millions below its proportionate quantity.

As the quantity of gold and ſilver, imported into Liſbon and Cadiz is more eaſily aſcertained than that of any commodity imported into England; and as the quantity of money coined at the Tower of London, is ſtill more poſitively known, the leading facts do not admit of controverſy. Either, therefore, the commerce of England is unproductive of profit, or the gold and ſilver which it brings in leak continually away by unſeen means, at the average rate of about three quarters of a million a-year, which, in the courſe of ſeventy-two years, accounts for the deficiency; and its abſence is ſupplied by paper.*

* *Whether the Engliſh commerce does not bring in money, or whether the government ſends it out after it is brought in, is a matter which the parties concerned can beſt explain; but that the deficiency exiſts, is not in the power of either to diſprove. While Dr. Price, Mr. Eden (now Auckland) Mr. Chalmers, and others, were debating whether the quantity of money was greater or leſs than at the revolution, the circumſtance was not adverted to, that ſince the revolution, there cannot have been leſs than four hundred millions ſterling imported into Europe; and therefore, the quantity in England ought at leaſt to have been four times greater than it was at the revolution, to be on a proportion with Europe. What England is now doing by paper, is what ſhe ſhould have been able to do by ſolid money, if gold and ſilver had come into the nation in the proporiton it ought,*

The revolution of France is attended with many novel circumſtances, not only in the political ſphere, but in the circle of money tranſactions. Among others, it ſhows that a government may be in a ſtate of inſolvency and a nation rich. So far as the fact is confined to the late government of France, it was inſolvent; becauſe the

or had not been ſent out; and ſhe is endeavouring to reſtore by paper, the balance ſhe has loſt by money. It is certain, that the gold and ſilver which arrive annually in the regiſter-ſhips to Spain and Portugal, do not remain in thoſe countries. Taking the value half in gold and half in ſilver, it is about four hundred tons annually; and from the number of ſhips and galleons employed in the trade of bringing thoſe metals from South America to Portugal and Spain, the quantity ſufficiently proves itſelf, without referring to the regiſters

In the ſituation England now is, it is impoſſible ſhe can increaſe in money. High taxes not only leſſen the property of the individuals but they leſſen alſo the money capital of the nation, by inducing ſmuggling, which can only be carried on by gold and ſilver. By the politics which the Britiſh government have carried on with the inland powers of Germany and the continent, it has made an enemy of all the maritime powers, and is therefore obliged to keep up a large navy; but though the navy is built in England, the naval ſtores muſt be purchaſed from abroad, and that from countries where the greateſt part muſt be paid for in gold and ſilver. Some fallacious rumours have been ſet afloat in England to induce a belief of money, and, among others, that of the French refugees bringing great quantities. The idea is ridiculous. The general part of the money in France is ſilver; and it would take upwards of twenty of the largeſt broad wheel waggons, with ten horſes each, to remove one million ſterling of ſilver. Is it then to be ſuppoſed, that a few people fleeing on horſe-back or in poſt-chaiſes, in a ſecret manner, and having the French cuſtom-houſe to paſs, and the ſea to croſs, could bring even a ſufficiency for their own expences?

When millions of money are ſpoken of, it ſhould be recollected, that ſuch ſums can only accumulate in a country by ſlow degrees, and a long proceſſion of time. The moſt frugal ſyſtem that England could now adopt, would not recover in a century the balance ſhe has loſt in money ſince the commencement of the Hanover ſucceſſion. She is ſeventy millions behind France, and ſhe muſt be in ſome conſiderable proportion behind every country in Europe, becauſe the returns of the Engliſh mint do not ſhew an increaſe of money, while the regiſters of Liſbon and Cadiz ſhew an European increaſe of between three and four hundred millions ſterling.

nation would no longer support its extravagance, and therefore it could no longer support itself—but with respect to the nation all the means existed. A government may be said to be insolvent every time it applies to a nation to discharge its arrears. The insolvency of the late government of France, and the present government of England, differed in no other respect than as the disposition of the people differ. The people of France refused their aid to the old government, and the people of England submit to taxation without enquiry. What is called the crown in England has been insolvent several times; the last of which, publicly known, was in May 1777, when it applied to the nation to discharge upwards of 600,000l. private debts, which otherwise it could not pay.

It was the error of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Burke, and all those who were unacquainted with the affairs of France, to confound the French nation with the French government. The French nation in effect, endeavoured to render the late government insolvent, for the purpose of taking government into its own hands; and it reserved its means for the support of the new government. In a country of such vast extent and population as France, the natural means cannot be wanting; and the political means appear the instant the nation is disposed to permit them. When Mr. Burke, in a speech last winter in the British parliament, *cast his eyes over the map of Europe, and saw a chasm that once was France*, he talked like a dreamer of dreams. The same natural France existed as before, and all the natural means existed with it. The only chasm was that which the extinction of despotism, had left, and which was to be filled up with a constitution more formidable in resources than the power which had expired.

Although the French nation rendered the late government insolvent, it did not permit the insolvency to act towards the creditors; and the creditors considering the nation as the real paymaster, and the government only as the agent, rested themselves on the nation, in preference to the government. This appears greatly to disturb Mr. Burke, as the precedent is fatal to the policy by which governments have supposed themselves secure. They have contracted debts, with a view of attaching what is called the monied interest of a nation to their support; but the example in France shews, that the permanent security of the creditor is in the nation, and not in the government; and that in all possible revolutions that may happen in governments, the means are always with the nation, and the nation always in existence. Mr. Burke argues, that the creditors ought to

have abided the fate of the government which they truſted; but the national aſſembly conſidered them as the creditors of the nation, and not of the government—of the maſter, and not of the ſteward.

Notwithſtanding the late government could not diſcharge the current expences, the preſent government has paid off a great part of the capital. This has been accompliſhed by two means; the one by leſſening the expences of government, and the other by the ſale of the monaſtic and eccleſiaſtical landed eſtates. The devotees and penitent debauchees, extortioners and miſers of former days, to enſure themſelves a better world than that which they were about to leave, had bequeathed immenſe property in truſt to the prieſthood, for *pious uſes*; and the prieſthood kept it for themſelves. The national aſſembly has ordered it to be ſold for the good of the whole nation, and the prieſthood to be decently provided for.

In conſequence of the revolution, the annual intereſt of the debt of France will be reduced at leaſt ſix millions ſterling, by paying off upwards of one hundred millions of the capital; which, with leſſening the former expences of government at leaſt three millions, will place France in a ſituation worthy the imitation of Europe.

Upon a whole review of the ſubject, how vaſt is the contraſt! While Mr. Burke has been talking of a general bankruptcy in France, the national aſſembly have been paying off the capital of its debt; and while taxes have increaſed near a million a-year in England, they have lowered ſeveral millions a-year in France. Not a word has either Mr. Burke or Mr. Pitt ſaid about French affairs, or the ſtate of the French finances, in the preſent ſeſſion of parliament. The ſubject begins to be too well underſtood, and impoſition ſerves no longer.

There is a general enigma running through the whole of Mr. Burke's book. He writes in a rage againſt the national aſſembly; but what is he enraged about? If his aſſertions were as true as they are groundleſs, and that France by her revolution had annihilated her power, and become what he calls a *chaſm*, it might excite the grief of a Frenchman (conſidering himſelf as a national man) and provoke his rage againſt the national aſſembly; but why ſhould it excite the rage of Mr. Burke?—Alas! it is not the nation of France that Mr. Burke means, but the COURT; and every court in Europe, dreading the ſame fate, is in mourning. He writes neither in the character of a Frenchman nor an Engliſhman, but in the fawning character of that creature known in all countries, and a

friend to none, a *courtier*. Whether it be the court of Verſailles, or the court of St. James or of Carlton-houſe, or the court in expectation, ſignifies not; for the caterpillar principles of all courts and courtiers are alike. They form a common policy throughout Europe, detached and ſeparate from the intereſt of the nations, and while they appear to quarrel, they agree to plunder. Nothing can be more terrible to a court or a courtier, than the revolution of France. That which is a bleſſing to nations, is bitterneſs to them; and as their exiſtence depends on the duplicity of a country, they tremble at the approach of principles, and dread the precedent that threatens their overthrow.

CONCLUSION.

Reaſon and ignorance, the oppoſites of each other, influence the great bulk of mankind. If either of theſe can be rendered ſufficiently extenſive in a country, the machinery of government goes eaſily on. Reaſon obeys itſelf, and ignorance ſubmits to whatever is dictated to it.

The two modes of government which prevail in the world, are *firſt*, government by election and repreſentation: *Secondly*, government by hereditary ſucceſſion. The former is generally known by the name of republic; the latter by that of monarchy and ariſtocracy.

Thoſe two diſtinct and oppoſite forms, erect themſelves on the two diſtinct and oppoſite baſis of reaſon and ignorance. As the exerciſe of government requires talents and abilities, and as talents and abilities cannot have hereditary deſcent, it is evident that hereditary ſucceſſion requires a belief from man, to which his reaſon cannot ſubſcribe, and which can only be eſtabliſhed upon his ignorance; and the more ignorant any country is, the better it is fitted for this ſpecies of government.

On the contrary, government in a well conſtituted republic requires no belief from man beyond what his reaſon can give. He ſees the *rationale* of the whole ſyſtem, its origin and its operation; and as it is beſt ſupported when beſt underſtood, the human faculties act with boldneſs, and acquire, under this form of government, a gigantic manlineſs.

As, therefore, each of thoſe forms acts on a different baſe, the one

moving freely by the aid of reaſon, the other by ignorance; we have next to conſider, what it is that gives motion to that ſpecies of government which is called mixed government, or, as it is ſometimes ludicrouſly ſtyled, a government of *this, that, and t'other.*

The moving power in this ſpecies of government, is of neceſſity corruption. However imperfect election and repreſentation may be in mixed governments, they ſtill give exerciſe to a greater portion of reaſon than is convenient to the hereditary part; and therefore it becomes neceſſary to buy the reaſon up. A mixed government is an imperfect every-thing, cementing and ſoldering the diſcordant parts together by corruption, to act as a whole. Mr. Burke appears highly diſguſted, that France, ſince ſhe had reſolved on a revolution, did not adopt what he calls "*A Britiſh conſtitution;*" and the regretful manner in which he expreſſed himſelf on this occaſion, implies a ſuſpicion, that the Britiſh conſtitution needed ſomething to keep its defects in countenance.

In mixed governments there is no reſponſibility; the parts cover each other till reſponſibility is loſt; and the corruption which moves the machine, contrives at the ſame time its own eſcape. When it is laid down as a maxim, that *a king can do no wrong*, it places him in a ſtate of ſimilar ſecurity with that of ideots and perſons inſane, and reſponſibility is out of the queſtion with reſpect to himſelf. It then deſcends upon the miniſter, who ſhelters himſelf under a majority in parliament, which, by places, penſions and corruption, he can always command; and that majority juſtifies itſelf by the ſame authority with which it protects the miniſter. In this rotatory motion, reſponſibility is thrown off from the parts, and from the whole.

When there is a part in a government which can do no wrong, it implies that it does nothing; and is only the machine of another power, by whoſe advice and direction it acts. What is ſuppoſed to be the king in mixed governments, is the cabinet; and as the cabinet is always a part of the parliament, and the numbers juſtifying in one character what they adviſe and act in another, a mixed government becomes a continual enigma; entailing upon a country, by the quantity of corruption neceſſary to ſolder the parts, the expence of ſupporting all the forms of government at once, and finally reſolving itſelf into a government by committee; in which the adviſers, the actors, the approvers, the juſtifiers, the perſons reſponſible, and the perſons not reſponſible, are the ſame perſons.

By this pantomimical contrivance, and change of ſcene and cha-

racter, the parts help each other out in matters, which, neither of them ſingly would aſſume to act. When money is to be obtained, the maſs of variety apparently diſſolves, and a profuſion of parliamentary praiſes paſſes between the parts. Each admires with aſtoniſhment the wiſdom, the liberality, the diſintereſtedneſs of the other; and all of them breathe a pitying ſigh at the burdens of the nation.

But in a well-conſtituted republic, nothing of this ſoldering, praiſing, and pitying, can take place; the repreſentation being equal throughout the country, and complete in itſelf, however it may be arranged into legiſlative and executive, they have all one and the ſame natural ſource. The parts are not foreigners to each other, like democracy, ariſtocracy, and monarchy. As there are no diſcordant diſtinctions, there is nothing to corrupt by compromiſe, nor confound by contrivance. Public meaſures appeal of themſelves to the underſtanding of the nation, and, reſting on their own merits, diſown any flattering application to vanity. The continual whine of lamenting the burden of taxes, however ſucceſsfully it may be practiſed in mixed governments, is inconſiſtent with the ſenſe and ſpirit of a republic. If taxes are neceſſary, they are of courſe advantageous; but if they require an apology, the apology itſelf implies an impeachment. Why then is man thus impoſed upon, or why does he impoſe upon himſelf?

When men are ſpoken of as kings and ſubjects, or when government is mentioned under diſtinct or combined heads of monarchy, ariſtocracy, and democracy, what is it that *reaſoning* man is to underſtand by the terms? If there really exiſted in the world two or more diſtinct and ſeparate *elements* of human power, we ſhould then ſee the ſeveral origins to which thoſe terms would deſcriptively apply: But as there is but one ſpecies of man, there can be but one element of human power: And that element is man himſelf. Monarchy, ariſtocracy, and democracy are but creatures of imagination; and a thouſand ſuch may be contrived as well as three.

From the revolutions of America and France, and the ſymptoms that have appeared in other countries, it is evident that the opinion of the world is changing with reſpect to ſyſtems of government, and that revolutions are not within the compaſs of political calculations. The

progreſs of time and circumſtances, which men aſſign to the accompliſhment of great changes, is too mechanical to meaſure the force of the mind, and the rapidity of reflection, by which revolutions are generated: All the old governments have received a ſhock from thoſe that already appear, and which were once more improbable, and are a greater ſubject of wonder, than a general revolution in Europe would be now.

When we ſurvey the wretched condition of man under the monarchical and hereditary ſyſtems of government, dragged from his home by one power, or driven by another, and impoveriſhed by taxes more than by enemies, it becomes evident that thoſe ſyſtems are bad, and that a general revolution in the principle and conſtruction of governments is neceſſary.

What is government more than the management of the affairs of a nation? It is not, and from its nature cannot be, the property of any particular man or family, but of the whole community, at whoſe expence it is ſupported; and though by force or contrivance it has been uſurped into an inheritance, the uſurpation cannot alter the right of things. Sovereignty, as a matter of right, appertains to the nation only, and not to any individual; and a nation has at all times an inherent indefeaſible right to aboliſh any form of government it finds inconvenient, and eſtabliſh ſuch as accords with its intereſt, diſpoſition and happineſs. The romantic and barbarous diſtinctions of men into kings and ſubjects, though it may ſuit the condition of courtiers cannot that of citizens; and is exploded by the principle upon which governments are now founded. Every citizen is a member of the ſovereignty, and as ſuch, can acknowledge no perſonal ſubjection; and his obedience can be only to the laws.

When men think of what government is, they muſt neceſſarily ſuppoſe it to poſſeſs a knowledge of all the objects and matters upon which its authority is to be exerciſed. In this view of government, the republican ſyſtem, as eſtabliſhed by America and France, operates to embrace the whole of a nation; and the knowledge neceſſary to the intereſt of all the parts, is to be found in the centre, which the parts by repreſentation form: but the old governments are on a conſtruction that excludes knowledge as well as happineſs; government by monks, who know nothing of the world beyond the walls of a convent, is as conſiſtent as government by kings.

What were formerly called revolutions, were little more than a change of perſons, or an alteration of local circumſtances. They roſe

and fell like things of courſe, and had nothing in their exiſtence or their fate that could influence beyond the ſpot that produced them. But what we now ſee in the world, from the revolutions of America and France, are a renovation of the natural order of things, a ſyſtem of principles as univerſal as truth and the exiſtence of man, and combining moral with political happineſs and national proſperity.

"I. *Men are born and always continue free and equal in reſpect to their rights. Civil diſtinctions, therefore, can be founded only on public utility.*

"II. *The end of all political aſſociations is the preſervation of the natural and impreſcriptible rights of man, and theſe rights are liberty, property, ſecurity and reſiſtance of oppreſſion.*

"III. *The nation is eſſentially the ſource of all ſovereignty; nor can any individual, or any body of men, be entitled to any authority which is not expreſsly derived from it.*"

In theſe principles is there nothing to throw a nation into confuſion, by inflaming ambition. They are calculated to call forth wiſdom and abilities, and to exerciſe them for the public good, and not for the emolument or aggrandiſement of particular deſcriptions of men or families. Monarchical ſovereignty, the enemy of mankind and the ſource of miſery, is aboliſhed; and ſovereignty itſelf is reſtored to its natural and original place, the nation. Were this the caſe throughout Europe, the cauſe of wars would be taken away.

It is attributed to Henry the Fourth of France, a man of an enlarged and benevolent heart, that he propoſed, about the year 1620, a plan for aboliſhing war in Europe. The plan conſiſted in conſtituting a European congreſs, or, as the French authors ſtile it, a pacific republic; by appointing delegates from the ſeveral nations, who were to act as a court of arbitration, in any diſputes that might ariſe between nation and nation.

Had ſuch a plan been adopted at the time it was propoſed, the taxes of England and France, as two of the parties, would have been at leaſt ten millions ſterling annually to each nation, leſs than they were at the commencement of the French revolution.

To conceive a cauſe why ſuch a plan has not been adopted (and that inſtead of a congreſs for the purpoſe of preventing war, it has been called only to *terminate* a war, after a fruitleſs expence of ſeveral years) it will be neceſſary to conſider the intereſt of governments as a diſtinct intereſt to that of nations.

Whatever is the cauſe of taxes to a nation, becomes alſo the means of revenue to a government. Every war terminates with an addition of taxes, and conſequently with an addition of revenue; and in any event of war, in the manner they are now commenced and concluded, the power and intereſt of governments are increaſed. War, therefore, from its productiveneſs, as it eaſily furniſhes the pretence of neceſſity for taxes and appointments to places and offices, becomes the principal part of the ſyſtem of old governments; and to eſtabliſh any mode to aboliſh war, however advantageous it might be to nations, would be to take from ſuch government the moſt lucrative of its branches. The frivolous matters upon which war is made, ſhew the diſpoſition and avidity of governments to uphold the ſyſtem of war, and betray the motives upon which they act.

Why are not republics plunged into war, but becauſe the nature of their government does not admit of an intereſt diſtinct to that of the nation? Even Holland, though an ill-conſtructed republic, and with a commerce extending over the world, exiſted nearly a century without war: And the inſtant the form of government was changed in France, the republican principles of peace, and domeſtic proſperity and economy, aroſe with the new government; and the ſame conſequences would follow the ſame cauſes in other nations.

As war is the ſyſtem of government on the old conſtruction, the animoſity which nations reciprocally entertain, is nothing more than what the policy of their governments excite, to keep up the ſpirit of the ſyſtem. Each government accuſes the other of perfidy, intrigue and ambition, as a means of heating the imagination of their reſpective nations, and incenſing them to hoſtilities. Man is not the enemy of man, but through the medium of a falſe ſyſtem of government. Inſtead therefore of exclaiming againſt the ambition of kings, the exclamation ſhould be directed againſt the principle of ſuch governments; and inſtead of ſeeking to reform the individual, the wiſdom of a nation ſhould apply itſelf to reform the ſyſtem.

Whether the forms and maxims of governments which are ſtill in practice, were adapted to the condition of the world at the period they were eſtabliſhed, is not in this caſe the queſtion. The older they are the leſs correſpondence can they have with the preſent ſtate of things. Time, and change of circumſtances and opinions have the ſame progreſſive effect in rendering modes of government obſolete, as they have upon cuſtoms and manners. Agriculture, commerce, manufactures and the tranquil arts, by which the proſperity of

nations is beſt promoted, require a different ſyſtem of government, and a different ſpecies of knowledge to direct its operations, to what might have been the former condition of the world.

As it is not difficult to perceive, from the enlightened ſtate of mankind, that hereditary governments are verging to their decline, and that revolutions on the broad baſis of national ſovereignty, and government by repreſentation, are making their way in Europe, it would be an act of wiſdom to anticipate their approach, and produce revolutions by reaſon and accommodation, rather than commit them to the iſſue of convulſions.

From what we now ſee, nothing of reform in the political world ought to be held improbable. It is an age of revolutions, in which every thing may be looked for. The intrigue of courts, by which the ſyſtem of war is kept up, may provoke a confederation of nations to aboliſh it: And a European congreſs to patronize the progreſs of free government, and promote the civilization of nations with each other is an event nearer in probability, than once were the revolutions and alliance of France and America.

RIGHTS OF MAN.

PART THE SECOND.

COMBINING

PRINCIPLE AND PRACTICE.

By THOMAS PAINE,

SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO THE AMERICAN CONGRESS,

IN THE LATE WAR.

AUTHOR OF A BOOK ENTITLED

"COMMON SENSE",

AND OF THE FIRST PART OF

"RIGHTS OF MAN."

TO

M. DE LA FAYETTE.

AFTER an acquaintance of nearly fifteen years, in difficult ſituations in America, and various conſultations in Europe, I feel a pleaſure in preſenting you this ſmall treatiſe, in gratitude for your ſervices to my beloved America, and as a teſtimony of my eſteem for the virtues, public and private, which I know you to poſſeſs.

The only point upon which I could ever diſcover that we differed, was not as to principles of government, but as to time. For my own part, I think it equally as injurious to good principles to permit them to linger, as to puſh them on too faſt. That which you ſuppoſe accompliſhable in fourteen or fifteen years, I may believe practicable in a much ſhorter period. Mankind, as it appears to me, are always ripe enough to underſtand their true intereſt, provided it be preſented clearly to their underſtanding, and that in a manner not to create ſuſpicion by any thing like ſelf-deſign, nor offend by aſſuming too much. Where we would wiſh to reform we muſt not reproach.

When the American revolution was eſtabliſhed, I felt a diſpoſition to ſit ſerenely down and enjoy the calm. It did not appear to me that any object could afterwards ariſe great enough to make me quit tranquility, and feel as I had felt before. But when principle and not place, is the energetic cauſe of action, a man, I find, is every where the ſame.

I am now once more in the public world ; and as I have not a right to contemplate on ſo many years of remaining life as you have, I am reſolved to labour as faſt as I can ; and as I am anxious for your aid and your company, I wiſh you to haſten your principles and overtake me.

If you make a campaign the enſuing ſpring, which it is moſt probable there will be no occaſion for, I will come and join you. Should the campaign commence, I hope it will terminate in the extinction of German deſpotiſm, and in eſtabliſhing the freedom of all Germany. When France ſhall be ſurrounded with revolutions, ſhe will be in peace and ſafety, and her taxes, as well as thoſe of Germany, will conſequently become leſs.

Your ſincere,

Affectionate friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

London, Feb. 9, 1792.

PREFACE.

WHEN I began the chapter entitled the *Concluſion* in the former part of the RIGHTS OF MAN, publiſhed laſt year, it was my intention to have extended it to a greater length; but in caſting the whole matter in my mind which I wiſhed to add, I found that I muſt either make the work too bulky, or contract my plan too much. I therefore brought it to a cloſe as ſoon as the ſubject would admit, and reſerved what I had further to ſay to another opportunity.

Several other reaſons contributed to produce this determination. I wiſhed to know the manner in which a work, written in a ſtyle of thinking and expreſſion different to what had been cuſtomary in England, would be received before I proceeded farther. A great field was opening to the view of mankind by means of the French revolution. Mr. Burke's outrageous oppoſition thereto brought the controverſy into England. He attacked principles which he knew (from information) I would conteſt with him, becauſe they are principles I believe to be good and which I have contributed to eſtabliſh, and conceive myſelf bound to defend. Had he not urged the controverſy, I had moſt probably been a ſilent man.

Another reaſon for deferring the remainder of the work was, that Mr. Burke promiſed in his firſt publication to renew the ſubject at another oportunity, and to make a compariſon of what he called the Engliſh and French conſtitutions. I therefore held myſelf in reſerve for him. He has publiſhed two works ſince, without doing this; which he certainly would not have omitted, had the compariſon been in his favour.

In his laſt work, his "*Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*," he has quoted about ten pages from the *Rights of Man*, and having given

himſelf the trouble of doing this, ſays, "he ſhall not attempt in the ſmalleſt degree to refute them," meaning the principles therein contained. I am enough acquainted with Mr. Burke to know, that he would if he could. But inſtead of conteſting them, he immediately after conſoles himſelf with ſaying that "he has done his part."—He has not done his part. He has not performed his promiſe of a compariſon of conſtitutions. He ſtarted a controverſy, he gave the challenge, and has fled from it; and he is now a *caſe in point* with his own opinion, that "*the age of chivalry is gone!*"

The title, as well as the ſubſtance of his laſt work, his "*Appeal*," is his condemnation. Principles muſt ſtand on their own merits, and if they are good they certainly will. To put them under the ſhelter of other men's authority, as Mr. Burke has done, ſerves to bring them into ſuſpicion. Mr. Burke is not very fond of dividing his honours, but in this caſe he is artfully dividing the diſgrace.

But who are thoſe to whom Mr. Burke has made his appeal? A ſet of childiſh thinkers and half-way politicians born in the laſt century; men who went no farther with any principle than as it ſuited their purpoſe as a party; the nation was always left out of the queſtion; and this has been the character of every party from that day to this. The nation ſees nothing in ſuch works, or ſuch politics worthy its attention. A little matter will move a party, but it muſt be ſomething great that moves a nation.

Though I ſee nothing in Mr. Burke's Appeal worth taking notice of, there is, however, one expreſſion upon which I ſhall offer a few remarks.—After quoting largely from the *Rights of Man*, and declining to conteſt the principles contained in that work, he ſays, "This will moſt probably be done *(if ſuch writings ſhall be thought to deſerve any other refutation than that of criminal juſtice)* by others, who may think with Mr. Burke and with the ſame zeal."

In the firſt place, it has not yet been done by any body. Not leſs, I believe than eight or ten pamphlets intended as anſwers to the former part of the "Rights of Man" have been publiſhed by different perſons, and not one of them, to my knowledge, has extended to a ſecond edition, nor are even the titles of them ſo much as generally remembered. As I am averſe to unneceſſarily multiplying publications, I have anſwered none of them. And as I believe that a man may write himſelf out of reputation when nobody elſe can do it, I am careful to avoid that rock.

But as I would decline unneceſſary publications on the one hand, ſo would I avoid every thing that might appear like ſullen pride on

the other. If Mr. Burke, or any perſon on his ſide the queſtion, will prodnce an anſwer to the "Rights of Man," that ſhall extend to an half, or even to a fourth part of the number of copies to which the Rights of Man extended, I will reply to his work. But until this be done, I ſhall ſo far take the ſenſe of the public for my guide (and the world knows I am not a flatterer) that what they do not think worth while to read, is not worth mine to anſwer. I ſuppoſe the number of copies to which the firſt part of the *Rights of Man* extended, taking England, Scotland, and Ireland, is not leſs than between forty and fifty thouſand.

I now come to remark on the remaining part of the quotation I have made from Mr. Burke.

"If," ſays he, "ſuch writings ſhall be thought to deſerve any other refutation than that of *criminal* juſtice."

Pardoning the pun, it muſt be *criminal* juſtice indeed that ſhould condemn a work as a ſubſtitute for not being able to refute it. The greateſt condemnation that could be paſſed upon it would be a refutation. But in proceeding by the method Mr. Burke alludes to, the condemnation would, in the final event, paſs upon the criminality of the proceſs and not upon the work, and in this caſe, I had rather be the author, than be either the judge, or the jury, that ſhould condemn it.

But to come at once to the point. I have differed from ſome profeſſional gentlemen on the ſubject of proſecutions, and I ſince find they are falling into my opinion, which I ſhall here ſtate as fully, hut as conciſely as I can.

I will firſt put a caſe with reſpect to any law, and then compare it with a government, or with what in England is, or has been, called a conſtitution,

It would be an act of deſpotiſm, or what in England is called arbitrary power, to make a law to prohibit inveſtigating the principles, good or bad, on which ſuch a law, or any other is founded.

If a law be bad, it is one thing to oppoſe the practice of it, but it is quite a different thing to expoſe its errors, to reaſon on its defects, and to ſhew cauſe why it ſhould be repealed, or why another ought to be ſubſtituted in its place. I have always held it an opinion (making it alſo my practice) that it is better to obey a bad law, making uſe at the ſame time of every argument to ſhew its errors and procure its repeal, than forcibly to violate it; becauſe the precedent of breaking a bad law might weaken the force, and lead to a diſcretionary violation, of thoſe which are good.

The caſe is the ſame with reſpect to principles and forms of government, or to what are called conſtitutions, and the parts of which they are compoſed.

It is for the good of nations, and not for the emolument or aggrandizement of particular individuals, that government ought to be eſtabliſhed, and that mankind are at the expence of ſupporting it. The defects of every government and conſtitution both as to principle and form muſt, on a parity of reaſoning, be as open to diſcuſſion as the defects of a law, and it is a duty which every man owes to ſociety to point them out. When thoſe defects, and the means of remedying them, are generally ſeen by a nation, that nation will reform its government or its conſtitution in the one caſe, as the government repealed or reformed the law in the other. The operation of government is reſtricted to the making and the adminiſtering of laws; but it is to a nation that the right of forming or reforming generating or regenerating conſtitutions and governments belong; and conſequently thoſe ſubjects, as ſubjects of inveſtigation, are always before a country *as a matter of right*, and cannot, without invading the general rights of that country, be made ſubjects for proſecution. On this ground I will meet Mr. Burke whenever he pleaſes. It is better that the whole argument ſhould come out, than to ſeek to ſtifle it. It was himſelf that opened the controverſy, and he ought not to deſert it.

I do not believe that monarchy and ariſtocracy will continue ſeven years longer in any of the enlightened countries in Europe. If better reaſons can be ſhewn for them than againſt them, they will ſtand; if the contrary, they will not. Mankind are not now to be told they ſhall not think, or they ſhall not read: And publications that go no farther than to inveſtigate principles of government, to invite men to reaſon and to reflect, and to ſhew the errors and excellencies of different ſyſtems, have a right to appear. If they do not excite attention, they are not worth the trouble of a proſecution; and if they do, the proſecution will amount to nothing, ſince it cannot amount to a prohibition of reading. This would be a ſentence on the public, inſtead of the author, and would alſo be the moſt effectual mode of making or haſtening revolutions.

On all caſes that apply univerſally to a nation, with reſpect to ſyſtems of government, a jury of *twelve* men is not competent to decide. Where there are no witneſſes to be examined, no facts to be proved, and where the whole matter is before the whole public, and the merits or demerits of it reſting on their opinion; and where

there is nothing to be known in a court, but what every body knows out of it, every twelve men is equally as good a jury as the other, and would moſt probably reverſe each other's verdict; or from the variety of their opinions, not be able to form one. It is one caſe, whether a nation approve a work, or a plan; but it is quite another caſe whether it will commit to any ſuch jury the power of determining whether that nation have a right to, or ſhall reform its government, or not. I mention thoſe caſes that Mr. Burke may ſee I have not written on government without reflecting on what is law, as well as on what are rights.—The only effectual jury in ſuch caſes would be a convention of the whole nation fairly elected; for in all ſuch caſes the whole nation is the vicinage. If Mr. Burke will propoſe ſuch a jury, I will wave all privileges of being the citizen of another country, and, defending its principles, abide the iſſue, provided he will do the ſame; for my opinion is, that his work and his principles would be condemned inſtead of mine.

As to the prejudices which men have from education and habit, in favour of any particular form or ſyſtem of government, thoſe prejudices have yet to ſtand the teſt of reaſon and reflection. In fact, ſuch prejudices are nothing. No man is prejudiced in favour of a thing knowing it to be wrong. He is attached to it on the belief of its being right; and when he ſees it is not ſo, the prejudice will be gone. We have but a defective idea of what prejudice is. It might be ſaid, that until men think for themſelves the whole is prejudice and *not opinion;* for that only is opinion which is the reſult of reaſon and reflection. I offer this remark, that Mr. Burke may not confide too much in what has been the cuſtomary prejudices of the country.

I do not believe that the people of England have ever been fairly and candidly dealt by. They have been impoſed upon by parties, and by men aſſuming the character of leaders. It is time that the nation ſhould riſe above thoſe trifles. It is time to diſmiſs that inattention which has ſo long been the encouraging cauſe of ſtretching taxation to exceſs. It is time to diſmiſs all thoſe ſongs and toaſts which are calculated to enſlave, and operate to ſuffocate reflection. On all ſuch ſubjects men have but to think, and they will neither act wrong nor be miſled. To ſay that any people are not fit for freedom, is to make poverty their choice, and to ſay they had rather be loaded with taxes than not. If ſuch a caſe could be proved, it would equally prove that thoſe who govern are not fit to govern them, for they are a part of the ſame national maſs.

But admitting governments to be changed all over Europe, it

certainly may be done without convulsion or revenge. It is not worth making changes or revolutions, unless it be for some great national benefit, and when this shall appear to a nation, the danger will be, as in America and France, to those who oppose; and with this reflection I close my preface.

THOMAS PAINE.

London, Feb. 9. 1792.

RIGHTS OF MAN.

PART II.

INTRODUCTION.

WHAT Archimedes ſaid of the mechanical powers, may be applied to Reaſon and Liberty: "*Had we,*" ſaid he, "*a place to ſtand upon, we might raiſe the world.*" δος που στω.

The revolution of America preſented in politics what was only theory in mechanics. So deeply rooted were all the governments of the old world, and ſo effectually had the tyranny and the antiquity of habit eſtabliſhed itſelf over the mind, that no beginning could be made in Aſia, Africa, or Europe, to reform the political condition of man. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe; reaſon was conſidered as rebellion; and the ſlavery of fear had made men afraid to think.

But ſuch is the irreſiſtible nature of truth, that all it aſks, and all it wants, is the liberty of appearing. The ſun needs no inſcription to diſtinguiſh him from darkneſs, and no ſooner did the American governments diſplay themſelves to the world, than deſpotiſm felt a ſhock, and man began to contemplate redreſs.

The independence of America, conſidered merely as a ſeparation from England, would have been a matter but of little importance, had it not been accompanied by a revolution in the principles and practice of government. She made a ſtand, not for herſelf only, but for the world, and looked beyond the advantages herſelf could receive. Even the Heſſian, though hired to fight againſt her, may live to bleſs his defeat; and England, condemning the viciouſneſs of its government, rejoice in its miſcarriage.

As America was the only ſpot in the political world, where the principles of univerſal reformation could begin, ſo alſo was it the beſt in the natural world. An aſſemblage of circumſtances conſpired, not only to give birth, but to add gigantic maturity to its principles. The ſcene which that country preſents to the eye of the ſpectator,

has ſomething in it which generates and enlarges great ideas. Nature appears to him in magnitude. The mighty objects he beholds, act upon his mind by enlarging it, and he partakes of the greatneſs he contemplates.—Its firſt ſettlers were emigrants from different European nations, and of diverſified profeſſions of religion, retiring from the governmental perſecutions of the old world, and meeting in the new, not as enemies, but as brothers. The wants which neceſſarily accompany the cultivation of a wilderneſs produced among them a ſtate of ſociety, which countries long haraſſed by the quarrels and intrigues of governments, had neglected to cheriſh. In ſuch a ſituation man becomes what he ought. He ſees his ſpecies, not with the inhuman idea of a natural enemy, but as kindred: and the example ſhews to the artificial world, that man muſt go back to nature for information.

From the rapid progreſs which America makes in every ſpecies of improvement, it is rational to conclude, that if the governments of Aſia, Africa, and Europe, had begun on a principle ſimilar to that of America, or had not been very early corrupted therefrom, that thoſe countries muſt by this time have been in a far ſuperior condition to what they are. Age after age has paſſed away, for no other purpoſe than to behold their wretchedneſs. Could we ſuppoſe a ſpectator who knew nothing of the world, and who was put into it merely to make his obſervations, he would take a great part of the old world to be new, juſt ſtruggling with the difficulties and hardſhips of an infant ſettlement. He could not ſuppoſe that the hordes of miſerable poor, with which old countries abound, could be any other than thoſe who had not yet had time to provide for themſelves. Little would he think they were the conſequence of what in ſuch countries is called government.

If, from the more wretched parts of the old world, we look at thoſe which are in an advanced ſtage of improvement, we ſtill find the greedy hand of government thruſting itſelf into every corner and crevice of induſtry, and graſping the ſpoil of the multitude. Invention is continually exerciſed, to furniſh new pretences for revenue and taxation. It watches proſperity as its prey, and permits none to eſcape without a tribute.

As revolutions have begun (and as the probability is always greater againſt a thing beginning, than of proceeding after it has begun,) it is natural to expect that other revolutions will follow. The amazing and ſtill increaſing expences with which old governments are conducted, the numerous wars they engage in or provoke,

the embarraſſments they throw in the way of univerſal civilization and commerce, and the oppreſſion and uſurpation they act at home, have wearied out the patience, and exhauſted the property of the world. In ſuch a ſituation, and with the examples already exiſting, revolutions are to be looked for. They are become ſubjects of univerſal converſation, and may be conſidered, as the *order of the day*.

If ſyſtems of government can be introduced leſs expenſive, and more productive of general happineſs, than thoſe which have exiſted, all attempts to oppoſe their progreſs will in the end be fruitleſs. Reaſon, like time, will make its own way, and prejudice will fall in the combat with intereſt. If univerſal peace, civilization and commerce are ever to be the happy lot of man, it cannot be accompliſhed but by a revolution in the ſyſtem of governments. All the monarchical governments are military. War is their trade, plunder and revenue their objects. While ſuch governments continue, peace has not the abſolute ſecurity of a day. What is the hiſtory of all monarchical governments, but a diſguſtful picture of human wretchedneſs, and the accidental reſpite of a few years repoſe? Wearied with war, and tired with human butchery, they ſat down to reſt and called it peace. This certainly is not the condition that Heaven intended for man; and if *this be monarchy*, well might monarchy be reckoned among the ſins of the Jews.

The revolutions which formerly took place in the world, had nothing in them that intereſted the bulk of mankind. They extended only to a change of perſons and meaſures but not of principles, and roſe or fell among the common tranſactions of the moment. What we now behold, may not improperly be called a "*counter revolution.*" Conqueſt and tyranny, at ſome early period, diſpoſſeſſd man of his rights, and he is now recovering them. And as the tide of all human affairs has its ebb and flow in directions contrary to each other, ſo alſo is it in this. Government founded on a *moral theory, on a ſyſtem of univerſal peace, on the indefeaſible hereditary rights of man*, is now revolving from weſt to eaſt by a ſtronger impulſe than the government of the ſword revolved from eaſt to weſt. It intereſts not particular individuals but nations in its progreſs, and promiſes a new era to the human race.

The danger to which the ſucceſs of revolutions is moſt expoſed, is that of attempting them before the principles on which they proceed, and the advantages to reſult from them, are ſufficiently ſeen and underſtood. Almoſt every thing appertaining to the circumſtances of a nation has been abſorbed and confounded under the general and my-

ſterious word *government*. Though it avoids taking to its account the errors it commits, and the miſchiefs it occaſions, it fails not to arrogate to itſelf whatever has the appearance of proſperity. It robs induſtry of its honours, by pedantically making itſelf the cauſe of its effects; and purloins from the general character of man, the merits that appertain to him as a ſocial being.

It may therefore be of uſe, in this day of revolutions, to diſcriminate between thoſe things which are the effect of government, and thoſe which are not. This will beſt be done by taking a review of ſociety and civilization, and the conſequences reſulting therefrom, as things diſtinct from what are called governments. By beginning with this inveſtigation, we ſhall be able to aſſign effects to their proper cauſe, and analyze the maſs of common errors.

CHAP. I.

OF SOCIETY AND CIVILIZATION.

GREAT part of that order which reigns among mankind is not the effect of government. It had its origin in the principles of ſociety, and the natural conſtitution of man. It exiſted prior to government, and would exiſt if the formality of government was aboliſhed. The mutual dependence and reciprocal intereſt which man has upon man, and all the parts of a civilized community upon each other, create that great chain of connection which holds it together. The landholder, the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradeſman, and every occupation proſpers by the aid which each receives from the other, and from the whole. Common intereſt regulates their concerns, and forms their laws; and the laws which common uſage ordains, have a greater influence than the laws of government. In fine, ſociety performs for itſelf almoſt every thing which is aſcribed to government.

To underſtand the nature and quantity of government proper for man, it is neceſſary to attend to his character. As nature created him for ſocial life, ſhe fitted him for the ſtation ſhe intended. In all caſes ſhe made his natural wants greater than his individual powers. No one man is capable, without the aid of ſociety, of ſupplying his own wants; and thoſe wants, acting upon every individual, impel the whole of them into ſociety, as naturally as gravitation acts to a centre.

But ſhe has gone further. She has not only forced man into ſociety by a diverſity of wants, which the reciprocal aid of each other can ſupply, but ſhe has implanted in him a ſyſtem of ſocial affections, which, though not neceſſary to his exiſtence, are eſſential to his happineſs. There is no period in life when this love for ſociety ceaſes to act. It begins and ends with our being.

If we examine, with attention, into the compoſition and conſtitution of man, the diverſity of his wants, and the diverſity of talents in different men for reciprocally accommodating the wants of each other, his propenſity to ſociety, and conſequently to preſerve the advantages reſulting from it, we ſhall eaſily diſcover, that a great part of what is called government is mere impoſition.

Government is no farther neceſſary than to ſupply the few caſes to which ſociety and civilization are not conveniently competent; and inſtances are not wanting to ſhew that every thing which government can uſefully add thereto, has been performed by the common conſent of ſociety, without government.

For upwards of two years from the commencement of the American war, and to a longer period in ſeveral of the American ſtates, there were no eſtabliſhed forms of government. The old governments had been aboliſhed, and the country was too much occupied in defence, to employ its attention in eſtabliſhing new governments; yet during this interval, order and harmony were preſerved as inviolate as in any country in Europe. There is a natural aptneſs in man, and more ſo in ſociety, becauſe it embraces a greater variety of abilities and reſource, to accommodate itſelf to whatever ſituation it is in. The inſtant formal government is aboliſhed, ſociety begins to act. A general aſſociation takes place, and common intereſt produces common ſecurity.

So far is it from being true, as has been pretended, that the abolition of any formal government is the diſſolution of ſociety, that it acts by a contrary impulſe, and brings the latter the cloſer together. All that part of its organization which it had committed to its government, devolves again upon itſelf, and acts through its medium. When men, as well from natural inſtinct, as from reciprocal benefits, have habituated themſelves to ſocial and civilized life, there is always enough of its principles in practice to carry them through any changes they may find neceſſary or convenient to make in their government. In ſhort, man is ſo naturally a creature of ſociety, that it is almoſt impoſſible to put him out of it.

Formal government makes but a ſmall part of civilized life ; and when even the beſt that human wiſdom can deviſe is eſtabliſhed, it is a thing more in name and idea, than in fact. It is to the great and fundamental principles of ſociety and civilization—to the common uſage univerſally conſented to, and mutually and reciprocally maintained—to the unceaſing circulation of intereſt, which, paſſing through its million channels, invigorates the whole maſs of civilized man—it is to theſe things, infinitely more than to any thing which even the beſt inſtituted government can perform, that the ſafety and proſperity of the individual and of the whole depends.

The more perfect civilization is, the leſs occaſion has it for government, becauſe the more does it regulate its own affairs, and govern itſelf ; but ſo contrary is the practice of old governments to the reaſon of the caſe, that the expences of them increaſe in the proportion they ought to diminiſh. It is but few general laws that civilized life requires, and thoſe of ſuch common uſefulneſs, that whether they are enforced by the forms of government or not, the effect will be nearly the ſame. If we conſider what the principles are that firſt condenſe men into ſociety, and what the motives that regulate their mutual intercourſe afterwards, we ſhall find, by the time we arrive at what is called government, that nearly the whole of the buſineſs is performed by the natural operation of the parts upon each other.

Man, with reſpect to all thoſe matters, is more a creature of conſiſtency than he is aware, or than governments would wiſh him to believe. All the great laws of ſociety are laws of nature. Thoſe of trade and commerce, whether with reſpect to the intercourſe of individuals, or of nations, are laws of mutual and reciprocal intereſt. They are followed and obeyed, becauſe it is the intereſt of the parties ſo to do, and not on account of any formal laws their governments may impoſe or interpoſe.

But how often is the natural propenſity to ſociety diſturbed or deſtroyed by the operations of government ! When the latter, inſtead of being ingrafted on the principles of the former, aſſumes to exiſt for itſelf, and acts by partialities of favour and oppreſſion, it becomes the cauſe of the miſchiefs it ought to prevent.

If we look back to the riots and tumults, which at various times have happened in England, we ſhall find, that they did not proceed from the want of a government, but that government was itſelf the generating cauſe ; inſtead of conſolidating ſociety, it divided it ; it deprived it of its natural coheſion, and engendered diſcontents and

diſorders, which otherwiſe would not have exiſted. In thoſe aſſociations which men promiſcuouſly form for the purpoſe of trade, or of any concern, in which government is totally out of the queſtion, and in which they act merely on the principles of ſociety, we ſee how naturally the various parties unite; and this ſhews, by compariſon, that governments, ſo far from being always the cauſe or means of order, are often the deſtruction of it. The riots of 1780 had no other ſource than the remains of thoſe prejudices, which the government itſelf had encouraged. But with reſpect to England there are alſo other cauſes.

Exceſs and inequality of taxation, however diſguiſed in the means, never fail to appear in their effect. As a great maſs of the community are thrown thereby into poverty and diſcontent, they are conſtantly on the brink of commotion; and, deprived, as they unfortunately are, of the means of information, are eaſily heated to outrage. Whatever the apparent cauſe of any riots may be, the real one is always want of happineſs. It ſhews that ſomething is wrong in the ſyſtem of government, that injures the felicity by which ſociety is to be preſerved.

But as fact is ſuperior to reaſoning, the inſtance of America preſents itſelf to confirm theſe obſervations.—If there is a country in the world, where concord, according to common calculation, would be leaſt expected, it is America. Made up, as it is, of people from different nations,* accuſtomed to different forms and habits of government, ſpeaking different languages, and more different in their modes of worſhip, it would appear that the union of ſuch a people was impracticable; but by the ſimple operation of conſtructing government

* *That part of America which is generally called New-England, including New-Hampſhire, Maſſachuſetts, Rhode-Iſland, and Connecticut, is peopled chiefly by Engliſh deſcendants. In the ſtate of New-York, about half are Dutch, the reſt Engliſh, Scotch, and Iriſh. In New-Jerſey, a mixture of Engliſh and Dutch, with ſome Scotch and Iriſh. In Pennſylvania, about one third are Engliſh, another Germans, and the remainder Scotch and Iriſh, with ſome Swedes. The ſtates to the ſouthward have a greater proportion of Engliſh than the middle States, but in all of them there is a mixture; and beſides thoſe enumerated, there are a conſiderable number of French, and ſome few of all the European nations lying on the coaſt. The moſt numerous religious denomination are the Preſbyterians; but no one ſect is eſtabliſhed above another, and all men are equally citizens.*

on the principles of ſociety and the rights of man, every difficulty retires, and all the parts are brought into cordial uniſon. There, the poor are not oppreſſed, the rich are not privileged. Induſtry is not mortified by the ſplendid extravagance of a court rioting at its expence. Their taxes are few, becauſe their government is juſt; and as there is nothing to render them wretched, there is nothing to engender riots and tumults.

A metaphyſical man, like Mr. Burke, would have tortured his invention to diſcover how ſuch a people could be governed. He would have ſuppoſed that ſome muſt be managed by fraud, others by force, and all by ſome contrivance; that genius muſt be hired to impoſe upon ignorance, and ſhew and parade to faſcinate the vulgar. Loſt in the abundance of his reſearches, he would have reſolved and re-reſolved, and finally overlooked the plain and eaſy road that lay directly before him.

One of the great advantages of the American revolution has been, that it led to a diſcovery of the principles, and laid open the impoſition of governments. All the revolutions till then had been worked within the atmoſphere of a court, and never on the great floor of a nation. The parties were always of the claſs of courtiers; and whatever was their rage for reformation, they carefully preſerved the fraud of the profeſſion.

In all caſes they took care to repreſent government as a thing made up of myſteries, which only themſelves underſtood: and they hid from the underſtanding of the nation, the only thing that was beneficial to know, namely, *That government is nothing more than a national aſſociation acting on the principles of ſociety.*

Having thus endeavoured to ſhew, that the ſocial and civilized ſtate of man is capable of performing within itſelf, almoſt every thing neceſſary to its protection and government, it will be proper, on the other hand, to take a review of the preſent old governments, and examine whether their principles and practice are correſpondent thereto.

CHAP. II.

Of the Origin of the preſent Old Governments.

IT is impoſſible that ſuch governments as have hitherto exiſted in the world, could have commenced by any other means than a total viola-

tion of every principle ſacred and moral. The obſcurity in which the origin of all the preſent old governments is buried, implies the iniquity and diſgrace with which they began. The origin of the preſent government of America and France will ever be remembered, becauſe it is honourable to record it; but with reſpect to the reſt, even Flattery has conſigned them to the tomb of time, without an inſcription.

It could have been no difficult thing in the early and ſolitary ages of the world, while the chief employment of men was that of attending flocks and herds, for a banditti of ruffians to overrun a country, and lay it under contributions. Their power being thus eſtabliſhed, the chief of the band contrived to loſe the name of robber in that of monarch; and hence the origin of monarchy and kings.

The origin of the government of England, ſo far as relates to what is called its line of monarchy, being one of the lateſt, is perhaps the beſt recorded. The hatred which the Norman invaſion and tyranny begat, muſt have been deeply rooted in the nation, to have out-lived the contrivance to obliterate it. Though not a courtier will talk of the corfeu-bell, not a village in England has forgotten it.

Thoſe bands of robbers having parcelled out the world, and divided into dominions, began, as is naturally the caſe, to quarrel with each other. What at firſt was obtained by violence, was conſidered by others as lawful to be taken, and a ſecond plunderer ſucceeded the firſt. They alternately invaded the dominions which each had aſſigned to himſelf, and the brutality with which they treated each other explains the original character of monarchy. It was ruffian torturing ruffian. The conqueror conſidered the conquered not as his priſoner, but his property. He led him in triumph rattling in chains, and doomed him, at pleaſure, to ſlavery or death. As time obliterated the hiſtory of their beginning, their ſucceſſors aſſumed new appearances, to cut off the entail of their diſgrace, but their principles and objects remained the ſame. What at firſt was plunder aſſumed the ſofter name of revenue; and the power originally uſurped, they affected to inherit.

From ſuch beginning of governments, what could be expected, but a continual ſyſtem of war and extortion? It has eſtabliſhed itſelf into a trade. The vice is not peculiar to one more than to another, but is the common principle of all. There does not exiſt within ſuch governments a ſtamina whereon to ingraft reformation; and the ſhorteſt and moſt effectual remedy is to begin anew.

What ſcenes of horror, what perfection of iniquity, preſent themſelves in contemplating the character, and reviewing the hiſtory of ſuch governments! If we would delineate human nature with a baſeneſs of heart, and hypocriſy of countenance, that reflection would ſhudder at and humanity diſown, it is kings, courts, and cabinets, that muſt ſit for the portrait. Man, naturally as he is, with all his faults about him, is not up to the character.

Can we poſſibly ſuppoſe that if government had originated in a right principle, and had not an intereſt in purſuing a wrong one, that the world could have been in the wretched and quarrelſome condition we have ſeen it? What inducement has the farmer, while following the plough, to lay aſide his peaceful purſuits, and go to war with the farmer of another country? Or what inducement has the manufacturer? What is dominion to them, or to any claſs of men in a nation? Does it add an acre to any man's eſtate, or raiſe its value? Are not conqueſt and defeat each of the ſame price, and taxes the never-failing conſequence?—Though this reaſoning may be good to a nation, it is not ſo to a government. War is the Pharo table of governments, and nations the dupes of the game.

If there is any thing to wonder at in this miſerable ſcene of governments, more than might be expected, it is the progreſs which the peaceful arts of agriculture, manufacture, and commerce have made, beneath ſuch a long accumulating load of diſcouragement and oppreſſion. It ſerves to ſhew, that inſtinct in animals does not act with ſtronger impulſe, than the principles of ſociety and civilization operate in man. Under all diſcouragements, he purſues his object, and yields to nothing but impoſſibilities.

CHAP. III.

Of the Old and New Syſtems of Government.

NOTHING can appear more contradictory than the principles on which the old governments began, and the condition to which ſociety, civilization, and commerce, are capable of carrying mankind. Government on the old ſyſtem, is an aſſumption of power, for the aggrandiſement of itſelf; on the new, a delegation of power, for the

common benefit of ſociety. The former ſupports itſelf by keeping up a ſyſtem of war; the latter promotes a ſyſtem of peace, as the true means of enriching a nation. The one encourages national prejudices; the other promotes univerſal ſociety, as the means of univerſal commerce. The one meaſures its proſperity, by the quantity of revenue it extorts; the other proves its excellence, by the ſmall quantity of taxes it requires.

Mr. Burke has talked of old and new whigs. If he can amuſe himſelf with childiſh names and diſtinctions, I ſhall not interrupt his pleaſure. It is not to him, but to the Abbe Sieyes, that I addreſs this chapter. I am already engaged to the latter gentleman, to diſcuſs the ſubject of monarchical government; and as it naturally occurs in comparing the old and new ſyſtems, I make this the opportunity of preſenting to him my obſervations. I ſhall occaſionally take Mr. Burke in my way.

Though it might be proved that the ſyſtem of government now called the NEW, is the moſt ancient in principle of all that have exiſted, being founded on the original inherent Rights of Man: yet, as tyranny and the ſword have ſuſpended the exerciſe of thoſe rights for many centuries paſt, it ſerves better the purpoſe of diſtinction to call it the *new*, than to claim the right of calling it the old.

The firſt general diſtinction between thoſe two ſyſtems, is, that the one now called the old is *hereditary*, either in whole or in part; and the new is entirely *repreſentative*. It rejects all hereditary government:

Firſt, As being an impoſition on mankind.

Secondly, As inadequate to the purpoſes for which government is neceſſary.

With reſpect to the firſt of theſe heads—It cannot be proved by what right hereditary government could begin: neither does there exiſt within the compaſs of mortal power, a right to eſtabliſh it. Man has no authority over poſterity in matters of perſonal right; and therefore, no man, or body of men, had, or can have, a right to ſet up hereditary government. Were even ourſelves to come again into exiſtence, inſtead of being ſucceeded by poſterity, we have not now the right of taking from ourſelves the rights which would then be ours. On what ground, then, do we pretend to take them from others?

All hereditary government is in its nature tyranny. An heritable crown, or an heritable throne, or by what other fanciful name ſuch things may be called, have no other ſignificant explanation than that

mankind are heritable property. To inherit a government, is to inherit the people, as if they were flocks and herds.

With reſpect to the ſecond head, that of being inadequate to the purpoſes for which government is neceſſary, we have only to conſider what government eſſentially is, and compare it with the circumſtances to which hereditary ſucceſſion is ſubject.

Government ought to be a thing always in full maturity. It ought to be ſo conſtructed as to be ſuperior to all the accidents to which individual man is ſubject; and therefore, hereditary ſucceſſion, by being *ſubject to them all*, is the moſt irregular and imperfect of all the ſyſtems of government.

We have heard the *Rights of Man* called a *levelling* ſyſtem; but the only ſyſtem to which the word *levelling* is truly applicable, is the hereditary monarchical ſyſtem. It is a ſyſtem of *mental levelling*. It indiſcriminately admits every ſpecies of character to the ſame authority. Vice and virtue, ignorance and wiſdom, in ſhort, every quality, good or bad, is put on the ſame level. Kings ſucceed each other, not as rationals, but as animals. It ſignifies not what their mental or moral characters are. Can we then be ſurpriſed at the abject ſtate of the human mind in monarchical countries, when the government itſelf is formed on ſuch an abject levelling ſyſtem?—It has no fixed character. To-day it is one thing; and to-morrow it is ſomething elſe. It changes with the temper of every ſucceeding individual, and is ſubject to all the varieties of each. It is government through the medium of paſſions and accidents. It appears under all the various characters of childhood, decrepitude, dotage, a thing at nurſe, in leading-ſtrings, or in crutches. It reverſes the wholeſome order of nature. It occaſionally puts children over men, and the conceits of non-age over wiſdom and experience. In ſhort, we cannot conceive a more ridiculous figure of government, than hereditary ſucceſſion, in all its caſes, preſents.

Could it be made a decree in nature, or an edict regiſtered in heaven, and man could know it, that virtue and wiſdom ſhould invariably appertain to hereditary ſucceſſion, the objections to it would be removed; but when we ſee that nature acts as if ſhe diſowned and ſported with the hereditary ſyſtem; that the mental characters of ſucceſſors, in all countries, are below the average of human underſtanding; that one is a tyrant, another an ideot, a third inſane, and ſome all three together, it is impoſſible to attach confidence to it, when reaſon in man has power to act.

It is not to the Abbe Sieyes that I need apply this reaſoning; he has already ſaved me that trouble, by giving his own opinion upon the caſe. "If it be aſked," ſays he, "what is my opinion with reſpect "to hereditary right, I anſwer, without heſitation, that, in good "theory, an hereditary tranſmiſſion of any power or office, can never "accord with the laws of a true repreſentation. Hereditaryſhip is, "in this ſenſe, as much an attaint upon principle, as an outrage upon "ſociety. But let us," continues he, "refer to the hiſtory of all "elective monarchies and principalities: is there one in which the "elective mode is not worſe than the hereditary ſucceſſion?"

As to debating on which is the worſt of the two, is admitting both to be bad; and herein we are agreed. The preference which the Abbe has given, is a condemnation of the thing that he prefers. Such a mode of reaſoning on ſuch a ſubject is inadmiſſible, becauſe it finally amounts to an accuſation upon Providence, as if ſhe had left to man no other choice with reſpect to government than between two evils, the beſt of which he admits to be, "*an attaint upon "principle, and an outrage upon ſociety.*"

Paſſing over, for the preſent, all the evils and miſchiefs which monarchy has occaſioned in the world, nothing can more effectually prove its uſeleſſneſs in a ſtate of *civil government*, than making it hereditary. Would we make any office hereditary that required wiſdom and abilities to fill it? and where wiſdom and abilities are not neceſſary, ſuch an office, whatever it may be, is ſuperfluous or inſignificant.

Hereditary ſucceſſion is a burleſque upon monarchy. It puts it in the moſt ridiculous light, by preſenting it as an office which any child or ideot may fill. It requires ſome talents, to be a common mechanic; but, to be a king, requires only the animal figure of man—a ſort of breathing automaton. This ſort of ſuperſtition may laſt a few years more, but it cannot long reſiſt the awakened reaſon and intereſt of man.

As to Mr. Burke, he is a ſtickler for monarchy, not altogether as a penſioner, if he is one, which I believe, but as a political man. He has taken up a contemptible opinion of mankind, who, in their turn, are taking up the ſame of him. He conſiders them as a herd of beings that muſt be governed by fraud, effigy, and ſhew; and an idol would be as good a figure of monarchy with him, as a man. I will, however, do him the juſtice to ſay, that, with reſpect to America, he has been very complimentary. He always contended, at leaſt in my

hearing, that the people of America were more enlightened than thoſe of England, or of any country in Europe; and that therefore the impoſition of ſhew was not neceſſary in their governments.

Though the compariſon between hereditary and elective monarchy, which the Abbe had made, is unneceſſary to the caſe, becauſe the repreſentative ſyſtem rejects both; yet, were I to make the compariſon, I ſhould decide contrary to what he has done.

The civil wars which have originated from conteſted hereditary claims, are more numerous, and have been more dreadful, and of longer continuance, than thoſe which have been occaſioned by election. All the civil wars in France aroſe from the hereditary ſyſtem; they were either produced by hereditary claims, or by the imperfection of the hereditary form, which admits of regencies, or monarchy at nurſe. With reſpect to England, its hiſtory is full of the ſame misfortunes. The conteſts for ſucceſſion between the houſes of York and Lancaſter, laſted a whole century; and others of a ſimilar nature, have renewed themſelves ſince that period. Thoſe of 1715 and 1745, were of the ſame kind. The ſucceſſion war for the crown of Spain, embroiled almoſt half Europe. The diſturbances in Holland are generated from the hereditaryſhip of the ſtadtholder. A government calling itſelf free, with an hereditary office, is like a thorn in the fleſh, that produces a fermentation which endeavours to diſcharge it.

But I might go further, and place alſo foreign wars, of whatever kind, to the ſame cauſe. It is by adding the evil of hereditary ſucceſſion to that of monarchy, that a permanent family intereſt is created, whoſe conſtant objects are dominion and revenue. Poland, though an elective monarchy, has had fewer wars than thoſe which are hereditary; and it is the only government that has made a voluntary eſſay, though but a ſmall one, to reform the condition of the country.

Having thus glanced at a few of the defects of the old, or hereditary ſyſtems of government, let us compare it with the new, or repreſentative ſyſtem.

The repreſentative ſyſtem takes ſociety and civilization for its baſis; nature, reaſon, and experience, for its guide.

Experience, in all ages, and in all countries has demonſtrated, that it is impoſſible to control Nature in her diſtribution of mental powers. She gives them as ſhe pleaſes. Whatever is the rule by which ſhe, apparently to us, ſcatters them among mankind, that

rule remains a ſecret to man. It would be as ridiculous to attempt to fix the hereditaryſhip of human beauty, as of wiſdom. Whatever wiſdom conſtituently is, it is like a ſeedleſs plant; it may be reared when it appears, but it cannot be voluntarily produced. There is always a ſufficiency ſomewhere in the general maſs of ſociety for all purpoſes; but with reſpect to the parts of ſociety, it is continually changing its place. It riſes in one to-day, in another to-morrow, and has moſt probably viſited in rotation every family of the earth, and again withdrawn.

As this is the order of nature, the order of government muſt neceſſary follow it, or government will, as we ſee it does, degenerate into ignorance. The hereditary ſyſtem, therefore, is as repugnant to human wiſdom, as to human rights: and is as abſurd, as it is unjuſt.

As the republic of letters brings forward the beſt literary productions, by giving to genius a fair and univerſal chance; ſo the repreſentative ſyſtem of government is calculated to produce the wiſeſt laws, by collecting wiſdom from where it can be found. I ſmile to myſelf when I contemplate the ridiculous inſignificance into which literature and all the ſciences would ſink, were they made hereditary; and I carry the ſame idea into governments. An hereditary governor is as inconſiſtent as an hereditary author. I know not whether Homer or Euclid had ſons: but I will venture an opinion, that if they had, and had left their works unfiniſhed, thoſe ſons could not have completed them.

Do we need a ſtronger evidence of the abſurdity of hereditary government, than is ſeen in deſcendants of thoſe men, in any line of life, who once were famous? Is there ſcarcely an inſtance in which there is not a total reverſe of the character? It appears as if the tide of mental faculties flowed as far as it could in certain channels, and then forſook its courſe, and aroſe in others. How irrational then is the hereditary ſyſtem which eſtabliſhes channels of power, in company with which wiſdom refuſes to flow! By continuing this abſurdity, man is perpetually in contradiction with himſelf; he accepts, for a king, or a chief magiſtrate, or a legiſlator, a perſon whom he would not elect for a conſtable.

It appears to general obſervation, that revolutions create genius and talents; but thoſe events do no more than bring them forward. There is exiſting in man, a maſs of ſenſe lying in a dormant ſtate, and which, unleſs ſomething excites it to action, will deſcend with

him, in that condition, to the grave. As it is to the advantage of ſociety that the whole of its faculties ſhould be employed, the conſtruction of government ought to be ſuch as to bring forward, by a quiet and regular operation, all that extent of capacity which never fails to appear in revolutions.

This cannot take place in the inſipid ſtate of hereditary government, not only becauſe it prevents, but becauſe it operates to benumb. When the mind of a nation is bowed down by any political ſuperſtition in its government, ſuch as hereditary ſucceſſion is, it loſes a conſiderable portion of its powers on all other ſubjects and objects. Hereditary ſucceſſion requires the ſame obedience to ignorance, as to wiſdom; and when once the mind can bring itſelf to pay this indiſcriminate reverence, it deſcends below the ſtature of mental manhood. It is fit to be great only in little things. It acts a treachery upon itſelf, and ſuffocates the ſenſations that urge to detection.

Though the ancient governments preſent to us a miſerable picture of the condition of man, there is one which above all others exempts itſelf from the general deſcription. I mean the democracy of the Athenians. We ſee more to admire, and leſs to condemn, in that great, extraordinary people, than in any thing which hiſtory affords.

Mr. Burke is ſo little acquainted with conſtituent principles of government, that he confounds democracy and repreſentation together. Repreſentation was a thing unknown in the ancient democracies. In thoſe the maſs of the people met and enacted laws (grammatically ſpeaking) in the firſt perſon. Simple democracy was no other than the common hall of the ancients. It ſignifies the *form*, as well as the public principle of the government. As theſe democracies increaſed in population, and the territory extended, the ſimple democratical form became unwieldly and impracticable; and as the ſyſtem of repreſentation was not known, the conſequence was, they either degenerated convulſively into monarchies, or became abſorbed into ſuch as then exiſted. Had the ſyſtem of repreſentation been then underſtood, as it now is, there is no reaſon to believe that thoſe forms of government, now called monarchical or ariſtocratical would ever have taken place. It was the want of ſome method to conſolidate the parts of ſociety, after it became too populous, and too extenſive for the ſimple democratical form, and alſo the lax and ſolitary condition of ſhepherds and herdſmen in other parts of the world, that afforded opportunities to thoſe unnatural modes of government to begin.

As it is neceſſary to clear away the rubbiſh of errors, into which the ſubject of government has been thrown, I ſhall proceed to remark on ſome others.

It has always been the political craft of courtiers and court governments, to abuſe ſomething which they called republicaniſm; but what republicaniſm was, or is, they never attempt to explain. Let us examine a little into this caſe.

The only forms of government are, the democratical, the ariſtocratical, the monarchical, and what is now called the repreſentative.

What is called a *republic*, is not any *particular form* of government. It is wholly characteriſtical of the purport, matter, or object for which government ought to be inſtituted, and on which it is to be employed, RES-PUBLICA, the public affairs, or the public good; or, literally tranſlated, the *public thing*. It is a word of a good original, referring to what ought to be the character and buſineſs of government; and in this ſenſe it is naturally oppoſed to the word *monarchy*, which has a baſe original ſignification. It means arbitrary power in an individual perſon; in the exerciſe of which, *himſelf*, and not the *res-publica*, is the object.

Every government that does not act on the principle of a *republic*, or in other words, that does not make the *res-publica* its whole and ſole object, is not a good government. Republican government is no other than government eſtabliſhed and conducted for the intereſt of the public, as well individually as collectively. It is not neceſſarily connected with any particular form, but it moſt naturally aſſociates with the repreſentative form, as being beſt calculated to ſecure the end for which a nation is at the expence of ſupporting it.

Various forms of government have affected to ſtyle themſelves a republic. Poland calls itſelf a republic, which is an hereditary ariſtocracy, with what is called an elective monarchy. Holland calls itſelf a republic, which is chiefly ariſtocratical, with an hereditary ſtadtholderſhip. But the government of America, which is wholly on the ſyſtem of repreſentation, is the only real republic in character and in practice, that now exiſts. Its government has no other object than the public buſineſs of the nation, and therefore it is properly a republic; and the Americans have taken care that THIS, and no other, ſhall always be the object of their government, by their rejecting every thing hereditary, and eſtabliſhing government on the ſyſtem of repreſentation only.

Thoſe who have ſaid that a republic is not a *form* of government calculated for countries of great extent, miſtook, in the firſt place,

the *buſineſs* of a government, for a *form* of government; for the *res-publica* equally appertains to every extent of territory and population. And, in the ſecond place, if they meant any thing with reſpect to *form*, it was the ſimple democratical form ſuch as was the mode of government in the ancient democracies, in which there was no repreſentation. The caſe, therefore, is not, that a republic cannot be extenſive, but that it cannot be extenſive on the ſimple democratical form; and the queſtion naturally preſents itſelf, *What is the beſt form of government for conducting the* RES-PUBLICA *or the* PUBLIC BUSINESS *of a nation, after it becomes too extenſive and populous for the ſimple democratical form?*

It cannot be monarchy, becauſe monarchy is ſubject to an objection of the ſame amount to which the ſimple democratical form was ſubject.

It is poſſible that an individual may lay down a ſyſtem of principles, on which government ſhall be conſtitutionally eſtabliſhed to any extent of territory. This is no more than an operation of the mind, acting by its own powers. But the practice upon thoſe principles, as applying to the various and numerous circumſtances of a nation, its agriculture, manufacture, trade, commerce, &c. &c. require a knowledge, of a different kind, and which can be had only from the various parts of ſociety. It is an aſſemblage of practical knowledge, which no one individual can poſſeſs; and therefore the monarchical form is as much limited, in uſeful practice, from the incompetency of knowledge, as was the democratical form, from the multiplicity of population. The one degenerates, by extenſion, into confuſion; the other, into ignorance and incapacity, of which all the great monarchies are an evidence. The monarchical form, therefore, could not be a ſubſtitute for the democratical, becauſe it has equal inconveniences.

Much leſs could it when made hereditary. This is the moſt effectual of all forms to preclude knowledge. Neither could the high democratical mind have voluntarily yielded itſelf to be governed by children and idiots, and all the motly inſignificance of character, which attends ſuch a mere animal-ſyſtem, the diſgrace and the reproach of reaſon and of man.

As to the ariſtocratical form, it has the ſame vices and defects with the monarchical, except that the chance of abilities is better from the proportion of numbers, but there is ſtill no ſecurity for the right uſe and application of them.*

* *For a character of ariſtocracy, the reader is referred to* Rights of Man, *Part I. p.* 74, *et ſeq.*

Referring, then, to the original ſimple democracy, it affords the true data from which government on a large ſcale can begin. It is incapable of extenſion, not from its principle, but from the inconvenience of its form; and monarchy and ariſtocracy, from their incapacity. Retaining, then, democracy as the ground, and rejecting the corrupt ſyſtems of monarchy and ariſtocracy, the repreſentative ſyſtem naturally preſents itſelf; remedying at once the defects of the ſimple democracy as to form, and the incapacity of the other two with reſpect to knowledge.

Simple democracy was ſociety governing itſelf without the aid of ſecondary means. By ingrafting repreſentation upon democracy, we arrive at a ſyſtem of government capable of embracing and confederating all the various intereſts and every extent of territory and population; and that alſo with advantages as much ſuperior to hereditary government, as the republic of letters is to hereditary literature.

It is on this ſyſtem that the American government is founded. It is repreſentation ingrafted upon democracy. It has fixed the form by a ſcale parallel in all caſes to the extent of the principle. What Athens was in miniature, America will be in magnitude. The one was the wonder of the ancient world; the other is becoming the admiration and model of the preſent. It is the eaſieſt of all the forms of government to be underſtood, and the moſt eligible in practice; and excludes at once the ignorance and inſecurity of the hereditary mode, and the inconvenience of the ſimple democracy.

It is impoſſible to conceive a ſyſtem of government capable of acting over ſuch an extent of territory, and ſuch a circle of intereſts, as is immediately produced by the operation of repreſentation. France, great and populous as it is, is but a ſpot in the capaciouſneſs of the ſyſtem. It adapts itſelf to all poſſible caſes. It is preferable to ſimple democracy even in ſmall territories. Athens, by repreſentation, would have outrivalled her own democracy.

That which is called government, or rather that which we ought to conceive government to be, is no more than ſome common centre, in which all the parts of ſociety unite. This cannot be eſtabliſhed by any method ſo conducive to the various intereſts of the community, as by the repreſentative ſyſtem. It concentrates the knowledge neceſſary to the intereſts of the parts, and of the whole. It places government in a ſtate of conſtant maturity. It is, as has been already obſerved, never young, never old. It is ſubject neither to nonage, nor dotage. It is never in the cradle, nor on crutches. It admits

not of a ſeparation between knowledge and power, and is ſuperior, as government always ought to be, to all the accidents of individual man, and is therefore ſuperior to what is called monarchy.

A nation is not a body, the figure of which is to be repreſented by the human body; but is like a body contained within a circle, having a common centre, in which every radius meets; and that centre is formed by repreſentation. To connect repreſentation with what is called monarchy, is eccentric government. Repreſentation is of itſelf the delegated monarchy of a nation, and cannot debaſe itſelf by dividing it with another.

Mr. Burke has two or three times in his parliamentary ſpeeches, and in his publications, made uſe of a jingle of words that convey no ideas. Speaking of government, he ſays, "It is better to have "monarchy for its baſis, and republicaniſm for its corrective, than "republicaniſm for its baſis, and monarchy for its corrective."—If he means that it is better to correct folly with wiſdom, than wiſdom with folly, I will no otherwiſe contend with him, than that it would be much better to reject the folly entirely.

But what is this thing which Mr. Burke calls monarchy? Will he explain it? All men can underſtand what repreſentation is; and that it muſt neceſſarily include a variety of knowledge and talents. But what ſecurity is there for the ſame qualities on the part of monarchy? or, when this monarchy is a child, where then is the wiſdom? What does it know about government? Who then is the monarch, or where is the monarchy? If it is to be performed by regency, it proves it to be a farce. A regency is a mock ſpecies of republic, and the whole of monarchy deſerves no better deſcription. It is a thing as various as imagination can paint. It has none of the ſtable character that government ought to poſſeſs. Every ſucceſſion is a revolution, and every regency a counter-revolution. The whole of it is a ſcene of perpetual court cabal and intrigue, of which Mr. Burke is himſelf an inſtance. To render monarchy conſiſtent with government, the next in ſucceſſion ſhould not be born a child, but a man at once, and that man a Solomon. It is ridiculous that nations are to wait, and government be interrupted, till boys grow to be men.

Whether I have too little ſenſe to ſee, or too much to be impoſed upon; whether I have too much or too little pride, or of any thing elſe, I leave out of the queſtion; but certain it is, that what is called monarchy, always appears to me a ſilly contemptible thing. I compare it to ſomething kept behind a curtain, about which there is

a great deal of buſtle and fuſs and a wonderful air of ſeeming ſolemnity; but when, by any accident, the curtain happens to be open and the company ſee what it is, they burſt into laughter.

In the repreſentative ſyſtem of government, nothing of this can happen. Like the nation itſelf, it poſſeſſes a perpetual ſtamina, as well of body as of mind, and preſents itſelf on the open theatre of the world in a fair and manly manner. Whatever are its excellencies or its defects, they are viſible to all. It exiſts not by fraud and myſtery; it deals not in cant and ſophiſtry; but inſpires a language, that, paſſing from heart to heart, is felt and underſtood.

We muſt ſhut our eyes againſt reaſon, we muſt baſely degrade our underſtanding, not to ſee the folly of what is called monarchy. Nature is orderly in all her works; but this is a mode of government that counteracts nature. It turns the progreſs of the human faculties upſide down. It ſubjects age to be governed by children, and wiſdom by folly.

On the contrary, the repreſentative ſyſtem is always parallel with the order and immutable laws of nature, and meets the reaſon of man in every part. For example:

In the American federal government, more power is delegated to the preſident of the United States, than to any other individual member of congreſs. He cannot, therefore, be elected to this office under the age of thirty-five years. By this time the judgment of man becomes matured, and he has lived long enough to be acquainted with men and things, and the country with him. But on the monarchical plan (excluſive of the numerous chances there are againſt every man born into the world, of drawing a prize in the lottery of human faculties), the next in ſucceſſion, whatever he may be, is put at the head of a nation, and of a government, at the age of eighteen years. Does this appear like an act of wiſdom? Is it conſiſtent with the proper dignity and the manly character of a nation? Where is the propriety of calling ſuch a lad the father of the people?—In all other caſes, a perſon is a minor until the age of twenty-one years. Before this period, he is not truſted with the management of an acre of land, or with the heritable property of a flock of ſheep, or an herd of ſwine; but, wonderful to tell! he may, at the age of eighteen years, be truſted with a nation.

That monarchy is all a bubble, a mere court artifice to procure money, is evident (at leaſt to me), in every character in which it can be viewed. It would be impoſſible, on the rational ſyſtem of repreſentative government, to make out a bill of expences to ſuch an enor-

mous amount as this deception admits. Government is not of itſelf a very chargeable inſtitution. The whole expence of the federal government of America, founded, as I have already ſaid, on the ſyſtem of repreſentation, and extending over a country nearly ten times as large as England, is but ſix hundred thouſand dollars, or one hundred and thirty-five thouſand pounds ſterling,

I preſume, that no man in his ſober ſenſes will compare the character of any of the kings of Europe, with that of General Waſhington. Yet, in France, and alſo in England, the expence of the civil liſt only, for the ſupport of one man, is eight times greater than the whole expence of the federal government in America. To aſſign a reaſon for this, appears almoſt impoſſible. The generality of people in America, eſpecially the poor, are more able to pay taxes, than the generality of people either in France or England.

But the caſe is, that the repreſentative ſyſtem diffuſes ſuch a body of knowledge throughout a nation, on the ſubject of government, as to explode ignorance and preclude impoſition. The craft of courts cannot be acted on that ground. There is no place for myſtery; no where for it to be begin. Thoſe who are not in the repreſentation, know as much of the nature of buſineſs as thoſe who are. An affectation of myſterious importance would there be ſcouted. Nations can have no ſecrets; and the ſecrets of courts, like thoſe of individuals, are always their defects.

In the repreſentative ſyſtem, the reaſon for every thing muſt publicly appear. Every man is a proprietor in government, and conſiders it a neceſſary part of his buſineſs to underſtand. It concerns his intereſt, becauſe it affects his property. He examines the coſt, and compares it with the advantages; and above all, he does not adopt the ſlaviſh cuſtom of following what in other governments are called LEADERS.

It can only be by blinding the underſtanding of man, and making him believe that government is ſome wonderful myſterious thing, that exceſſive revenues are obtained. Monarchy is well calculated to enſure this end. It is the popery of government; a thing kept up to amuſe the ignorant, and quiet them into taxes.

The government of a free country, properly ſpeaking, is not in the perſons, but in the laws. The enacting of thoſe requires no great expence; and when they are adminiſtered, the whole of civil government is performed—the reſt is all court contrivance.

CHAP. IV.

ON CONSTITUTIONS.

THAT men mean diſtinct and ſeparate things when they ſpeak of conſtitutions and of governments, is evident; or, why are thoſe terms diſtinctly and ſeparately uſed? A conſtitution is not the act of a government, but of a people conſtituting a government; and government without a conſtitution, is power without a right.

All power exerciſed over a nation, muſt have ſome beginning. It muſt be either delegated, or aſſumed. There are no other ſources. All delegated power is truſt, and all aſſumed power is uſurpation. Time does not alter the nature and quality of either.

In viewing this ſubject, the caſe and circumſtances of America preſent themſelves as in the beginning of a world; and our enquiry into the origin of government is ſhortened, by referring to the facts that have ariſen in our own day. We have no occaſion to roam for information into the obſcure field of antiquity, nor hazard ourſelves upon conjecture. We are brought at once to the point of ſeeing government begin, as if we had lived in the beginning of time. The real volume, not of hiſtory, but of facts, is directly before us, unmutilated by contrivance, or the errors of tradition.

I will here conciſely ſtate the commencement of the American conſtitutions; by which the difference between conſtitutions and governments will ſufficiently appear.

It may not be improper to remind the reader, that the United States of America conſiſt of thirteen ſeparate ſtates, each of which eſtabliſhed a government for itſelf, after the declaration of independence, done the fourth of July 1776. Each ſtate acted independently of the reſt, in forming its government; but the ſame general principle pervades the whole. When the ſeveral ſtate governments were formed, they proceeded to form the federal government, that acts over the whole in all matters which concern the intereſt of the whole, or which relate to the intercourſe of the ſeveral ſtates with each other, or with foreign nations. I will begin with giving an inſtance from one of the ſtate governments (that of Pennſylvania), and then proceed to the federal government.

The ſtate of Pennſylvania, though nearly of the ſame extent of territory as England, was then divided into only twelve counties. Each of thoſe counties had elected a committee at the commencement of the diſpute with the Engliſh government; and as the city of Philadelphia,

which alſo had its committee, was the moſt central for intelligence, it became the centre of communication to the ſeveral county committees. When it became neceſſary to proceed to the formation of a government, the committee of Philadelphia propoſed a conference of all the county committees, to be held in that city, and which met the latter end of July 1776.

Though theſe committees had been elected by the people, they were not elected expreſsly for the purpoſe, nor inveſted with the authority of forming a conſtitution; and as they could not, conſiſtently with the American idea of rights, aſſume ſuch a power, they could only confer upon the matter, and put it into a train of operation. The conferees, therefore, did no more than ſtate the caſe, and recommend to the ſeveral counties to elect ſix repreſentatives for each county, to meet in convention at Philadelphia, with powers to form a conſtitution, and propoſe it for public conſideration.

This convention, of which Benjamin Franklin was preſident, having met and deliberated, and agreed upon a conſtitution, they next ordered it to be publiſhed, not as a thing eſtabliſhed, but for the conſideration of the whole people, their approbation or rejection, and then adjourned to a ſtated time. When the time of adjournment was expired, the convention re-aſſembled; and as the general opinion of the people in approbation of it was then known, the conſtitution was ſigned, ſealed, and proclaimed on the *authority of the people*, and the original inſtrument depoſited as a public record. The convention then appointed a day for the general election of the repreſentatives who were to compoſe the government, and the time it ſhould commence; and having done this, they diſſolved, and returned to their ſeveral homes and occupations.

In this conſtitution were laid down, firſt a declaration of rights, Then followed the form which the government ſhould have, and the powers it ſhould poſſeſs—the authority of the courts of judicature, and of juries—the manner in which elections ſhould be conducted, and the proportion of repreſentatives to the number of electors—the time which each ſucceeding aſſembly ſhould continue, which was one year—the mode of levying, and of accounting for the expenditure, of public money—of appointing public officers, &c. &c. &c.

No article of this conſtitution could be altered or infringed at the diſcretion of the government that was to enſue. It was to that government a law. But as it would have been unwiſe to preclude the benefit of experience, and in order alſo to prevent the accumulation of errors, if any ſhould be found, and to preſerve an uniſon of

government with the circumſtances of the ſtate at all times, the conſtitution provided, that, at the expiration of every ſeven years, a convention ſhould be elected; for the expreſs purpoſe of reviſing the conſtitution, and making alterations, additions, or abolitions therein, if any ſuch ſhould be found neceſſary.

Here we ſee a regular proceſs—a government iſſuing out of a conſtitution, formed by the people in their original character; and that conſtitution, ſerving, not only as an authority, but as a law of control to the government. It was the political bible of the ſtate. Scarcely a family was without it. Every member of the government had a copy; and nothing was more common, when any debate aroſe on the principle of a bill, or on the extent of any ſpecies of authority, than for the members to take the printed conſtitution out of their pocket, and read the chapter with which ſuch matter in debate was connected.

Having thus given an inſtance from one of the ſtates, I will ſhew the proceedings by which the federal conſtitution of the United States aroſe and was formed.

Congreſs, at its two firſt meetings, in September 1774, and May 1775, was nothing more than a deputation from the legiſlatures of the ſeveral provinces, afterwards ſtates; and had no other authority than what aroſe from common conſent, and the neceſſity of its acting as a public body. In every thing which related to the internal affairs of America, congreſs went no further than to iſſue recommendation to the ſeveral provincial aſſemblies, who at diſcretion adopted them or not. Nothing on the part of congreſs was compulſive; yet, in this ſituation, is was more faithfully and affectionately obeyed, than was any government in Europe. This inſtance, like that of the national aſſembly of France, ſufficiently ſhews, that the ſtrength of government does not conſiſt in any thing *within* itſelf, but in the attachment of a nation, and the intereſt which the people feel in ſupporting it. When this is loſt, government is but a child in power; and though, like the old government of France, it may haraſs individuals for a while, it but facilitates its own fall.

After the declaration of independence, it became conſiſtent with the principle on which repreſentative government is founded, that the authority of congreſs ſhould be defined and eſtabliſhed. Whether that authority ſhould be more or leſs than congreſs then diſcretionally exerciſed, was not the queſtion. It was merely the rectitude of the meaſure.

For this purpoſe the act, called the act of confederation (which

was a ſort of imperfect federal conſtitution) was propoſed and, after long deliberation, was concluded in the year 1781. It was not the act of congreſs, becauſe it is repugnant to the principles of repreſentative government that a body ſhould give power to itſelf. Congreſs firſt informed the ſeveral ſtates, of the powers which it conceived were neceſſary to be inveſted in the union, to enable it to perform the duties and ſervices required from it; and the ſtates ſeverally agreed with each other, and concentrated in congreſs thoſe powers.

It may not be improper to obſerve, that in both thoſe inſtances (the one of Pennſylvania, and the other of the United States) there is no ſuch thing as the idea of a compact between the people on one ſide, and the government on the other. The compact was that of the people with each other, to produce and conſtitute a government. To ſuppoſe that any government can be a party in a compact with the whole people, is to ſuppoſe it to have exiſtence before it can have a right to exiſt. The only inſtance in which a compact can take place between the people and thoſe who exerciſe the government, is, that the people ſhall pay them, while they chooſe to employ them.

Government is not a trade which any man or body of men has a right to ſet up and exerciſe for his own emolument, but is altogether a truſt, in right of thoſe by whom that truſt is delegated, and by whom it is always reſumable. It has of itſelf no rights; they are altogether duties.

Having thus given two inſtances of the original formation of a conſtitution, I will ſhew the manner in which both have been changed ſince their firſt eſtabliſhment.

The powers veſted in the governments of the ſeveral ſtates, by the ſtate conſtitutions, were found, upon experience, to be too great; and thoſe veſted in the federal government, by the act of confederation, too little. The defect was not in the principle, but in the diſtribution of power.

Numerous publications, in pamphlets and in the newſpapers, appeared on the propriety and neceſſity of new modelling the federal government. After ſome time of public diſcuſſion, carried on through the channel of the preſs, and in converſations, the ſtate of Virginia, experiencing ſome inconvenience with reſpect to commerce, propoſed holding a continental conference; in conſequence of which a deputation from five or ſix of the ſtate aſſemblies met at Annapolis in Maryland, in 1786. This meeting, not conceiving itſelf ſufficiently authoriſed to go into the buſineſs of a reform, did no more than ſtate their general opinions of the propriety of the meaſure, and

recommend that a convention of all the ſtates ſhould be held the year following.

This convention met at Philadelphia, in May 1787, of which general Waſhington was elected preſident. He was not at that time connected with any of the ſtate governments, or with congreſs. He delivered up his commiſſion when the war ended, and ſince then had lived a private citizen.

The convention went deeply into all the ſubjects; and having, after a variety of debate and inveſtigation, agreed among themſelves upon the ſeveral parts of a federal conſtitution, the next queſtion was, the manner of giving it authority and practice.

For this purpoſe, they did not, like a cabal of courtiers, ſend for a Dutch ſtadtholder, or a German elector; but they referred the whole matter to the ſenſe and intereſt of the country.

They firſt directed, that the propoſed conſtitution ſhould be publiſhed. Secondly, that each ſtate ſhould elect a convention, expreſsly for the purpoſe of taking it into conſideration, and of ratifying or rejecting it: And that as ſoon as the approbation and ratification of any nine ſtates ſhould be given, that thoſe ſtates ſhould proceed to the election of their proportion of members to the new federal government; and that the operation of it ſhould then begin, and the former federal government ceaſe.

The ſeveral ſtates proceeded accordingly to elect their conventions, ſome of thoſe conventions ratified the conſtitution by very large majorities, and two or three unanimouſly. In others there were much debate and diviſion of opinion. In the Maſſachuſetts convention, which met at Boſton, the majority was not above nineteen or twenty, in about three hundred members; but ſuch is the nature of repreſentative government, that it quietly decides all matters by majority. After the debate in the Maſſachuſetts convention was cloſed, and the vote taken, the objecting members roſe, and declared, "*That though "they had argued and voted againſt it, becauſe certain parts appeared to "them in a different light to what they appeared to other members; yet, "as the vote had decided in favour of the conſtitution as propoſed, they "ſhould give it the ſame practical ſupport as if they had voted for it.*"

As ſoon as nine ſtates had concurred (and the reſt followed in the order their conventions were elected), the old fabric of the federal government was taken down, and a new one elected, of which General Waſhington is preſident.—In this place I cannot help remarking, that the character and ſervices of this gentleman are ſufficient to put all thoſe men called kings to ſhame. While they are receiving

from the ſweat and labours of mankind, a prodigality of pay, to which neither their abilities nor their ſervices can entitle them, he is rendering every ſervice in his power, and refuſing every pecuniary reward. He accepted no pay as commander in chief; he accepts none as preſident of the United States.

After the new federal conſtitution was eſtabliſhed, the ſtate of Pennſylvania, conceiving that ſome parts of its own conſtitution required to be altered, elected a convention for that purpoſe. The propoſed alterations were publiſhed, and the people concurring therein, they were eſtabliſhed.

In forming thoſe conſtitutions, or in altering them, little or no inconvenience took place. The ordinary courſe of things was not interrupted, and the advantages have been much. It is always the intereſt of a far greater number of people in a nation to have things right, than to let them remain wrong; and when public matters are open to debate, and the public judgment free, it will not decide wrong, unleſs it decides too haſtily.

In the two inſtances of changing the conſtitutions, the government then in being were not actors either way. Government has no right to make itſelf a party in any debate reſpecting the principles or modes of forming, or of changing conſtitutions. It is not for the benefit of thoſe who exerciſe the powers of government, that conſtitutions, and the governments iſſuing from them, are eſtabliſhed. In all thoſe matters, the right of judging and acting are in thoſe who pay, and not in thoſe who receive.

A conſtitution is the property of a nation, and not of thoſe who exerciſe the government. All the conſtitutions of America are declared to be eſtabliſhed on the authority of the people. In France, the word nation is uſed inſtead of the people; but in both caſes, a conſtitution is a thing antecedent to the government, and always diſtinct therefrom.

In England, it is not difficult to perceive that every thing has a conſtitution, except the nation. Every ſociety and aſſociation that is eſtabliſhed, firſt agreed upon a number of original articles, digeſted into form, which are its conſtitution. It then appointed its officers, whoſe powers and authorities are deſcribed in that conſtitution, and the government of that ſociety then commenced. Thoſe officers, by whatever name they are called, have no authority to add to, alter, or abridge the original articles. It is only to the conſtituting power that this right belongs.

From the want of underſtanding the difference between a conſtitu-

tion and a government, Dr. Johnſon, and all writers of his deſcription, have always bewildered themſelves. They could not but perceive, that there muſt neceſſarily be a *controlling* power exiſting ſomewhere, and they placed this power in the diſcretion of the perſons exerciſing the government, inſtead of placing it in a conſtitution formed by the nation. When it is in a conſtitution, it has the nation for its ſupport, and the natural and the political controlling powers are together. The laws which are enacted by governments, control men only as individuals, but the nation, through its conſtitution, controls the whole government, and has a natural ability ſo to do. The final controlling power, therefore, and the original conſtituting power, are one and the ſame power.

Dr. Johnſon could not have advanced ſuch a poſition in any country where there was a conſtitution; and he is himſelf an evidence, that no ſuch thing as a conſtitution exiſts in England.—But it may be put as a queſtion, not improper to be inveſtigated, That if a conſtitution does not exiſt, how came the idea of its exiſtence ſo generally eſtabliſhed?

In order to decide this queſtion, it is neceſſary to conſider a conſtitution in both its caſes:—Firſt, as creating a government and giving it powers. Secondly, as regulating and reſtraining the powers ſo given.

If we begin with William of Normandy, we find that the government of England was originally a tyranny, founded on an invaſion and conqueſt of the country. This being admitted, it will then appear, that the exertion of the nation, at different periods, to abate that tyranny, and render it leſs intolerable, has been credited for a conſtitution.

Magna Charta, as it was called (it is now like an almanac of the ſame date,) was no more than compelling the government to renounce a part of its aſſumptions. It did not create and give powers to government in the manner a conſtitution does; but, was, as far as it went, of the nature of a re-conqueſt, and not of a conſtitution; for could the nation have totally expelled the uſurpation, as France has done its deſpotiſm, it would then have had a conſtitution to form.

The hiſtory of the Edwards and the Henries, and up to the commencement of the Stuarts, exhibits as many inſtances of tyranny as could be acted within the limits to which the nation had reſtricted it. The Stuarts endeavoured to paſs thoſe limits, and their fate is well known. In all thoſe inſtances we ſee nothing of a conſtitution, but only of reſtrictions on aſſumed power.

After this, another William, deſcended from the ſame ſtock, and claiming from the ſame origin, gained poſſeſſion; and of the two evils, *James* and *William*, the nation preferred what it thought the leaſt; ſince, from the circumſtances, it muſt take one. The act, called the Bill of Rights, comes here into view. What is it, but a bargain, which the parts of the government made with each other to divide powers, profits, and privileges? You ſhall have ſo much, and I will have the reſt; and with reſpect to the nation, it ſaid, for *your ſhare*, YOU *ſhall have the right of petitioning*. This being the caſe, the bill of rights is more properly a bill of wrongs, and of inſult. As to what is called the convention parliament, it was a thing that made itſelf, and then made the authority by which it acted. A few perſons got together, and called themſelves by that name. Several of them had never been elected, and none of them for the purpoſe.

From the time of William, a ſpecies of government aroſe, iſſuing out of this coalition bill of rights; and more ſo, ſince the corruption introduced at the Hanover ſucceſſion, by the agency of Walpole: That can be deſcribed by no other name than a deſpotic legiſlation. Though the parts may embarraſs each other, the whole has no bounds; and the only right it acknowledges out of itſelf, is the right of petitioning. Where then is the conſtitution either that gives or that reſtrains power?

It is not becauſe a part of the government is elective, that makes it leſs a deſpotiſm, if the perſons ſo elected, poſſeſs afterwards, as a parliament, unlimited powers. Election, in this caſe, becomes ſeparated from repreſentation, and the candidates are candidates for deſpotiſm.

I cannot believe that any nation, reaſoning on its own rights, would have thought of calling thoſe things *a conſtitution*, if the cry of conſtitution had not been ſet up by the government. It has got into circulation like the words *bore* and *quoz*, by being chalked up in the ſpeeches of parliament, as thoſe words were on window ſhutters and door poſts; but whatever the conſtitution may be in other reſpects, it has undoubtedly been *the moſt productive machine of taxation that was ever invented*. The taxes in France, under the new conſtitution, are not quite thirteen ſhillings per head,* and the taxes

* *The whole amount of the aſſeſſed taxes of France, for the preſent year, is three hundred millions of livres, which is twelve millions and a half ſterling: and the incidental taxes are eſtimated at three millions, making in the whole fifteen millions and a half; which among twenty-*

in England under what is called its preſent conſtitution, are forty-eight ſhillings and ſix pence per head, men, women, and children, amounting to nearly ſeventeen millions ſterling, beſides the expence of collection, which is upwards of a million more

In a country like England, where the whole of the civil government is executed by the people of every town and county, by means of pariſh officers, magiſtrates, quarterly ſeſſions, juries, and aſſize; without any trouble to what is called the government, or any other expence to the revenue than the ſalary of the judges, it is aſtoniſhing how ſuch a maſs of taxes can be employed. Not even the internal defence of the country is paid out of the revenue. On all occaſions, whether real or contrived, recourſe is continually had to new loans and to new taxes. No wonder, then, that a machine of government ſo advantageous to the advocates of a court, ſhould be ſo thriumphantly extolled! No wonder, that St. James's or St. Stephen's ſhould echo with the continual cry of conſtitution! No wonder, that the French revolution ſhould be reprobated, and the *reſpublica* treated with reproach! The *red book* of England, like the red book of France, will explain the reaſon.*

I will now, by way of relaxation, turn a thought or two to Mr. Burke. I aſk his pardon for neglecting him ſo long.

"America," ſays he, (in his ſpeech on the Canada conſtitution bill), "never dreamed of ſuch abſurd doctrine as the *Rights of Man.*"

Mr. Burke is ſuch a bold preſumer, and advances his aſſertions and his premiſes with ſuch a deficiency of judgment, that, without troubling ourſelves about principles of philoſophy or politics, the mere logical concluſions they produce, are ridiculous. For inſtance,

If governments, as Mr. Burke aſſerts, are not founded on the rights of MAN, and are founded on *any rights* at all, they conſequently muſt be founded on the rights of *ſomething* that is *not man.* What then is that ſomething?

four millions of people, is not quite thirty ſhillings per head. France has leſſened her taxes ſince the revolution, nearly nine millions ſterling annually. Before the revolution, the city of Paris paid a duty of upwards of thirty per cent. on all articles brought into the city. This tax was collected at the city gates. It was taken off on the firſt of laſt May, and the gates taken down.

* *What was called the* livre rouge, *or the red book, in France, was not exactly ſimilar to the court calendar in England; but it ſufficiently ſhewed how a great part of the taxes were laviſhed.*

Generally ſpeaking, we know of no other creatures that inhabit the earth than man and beaſt; and in all caſes, where only two things offer themſelves, and one muſt be admitted, a negation proved on any one, amounts to an affirmative on the other; and therefore, Mr. Burke, by proving againſt the rights of *man*, proves in behalf of the *beaſt*; and conſequently, proves that government is a beaſt: And as difficult things ſometimes explain each other, we now ſee the origin of keeping wild beaſts in the Tower; for they certainly can be of no other uſe than to ſhew the origin of the government. They are in the place of a conſtitution. O John Bull, what honours thou haſt loſt by not being a wild beaſt. Thou mighteſt, on Mr. Burke's ſyſtem, have been in the Tower for life.

If Mr. Burke's arguments have not weight enough to keep one ſerious, the fault is leſs mine than his; and as I am willing to make an apology to the reader for the liberty I have taken, I hope Mr. Burke will alſo make his for giving the cauſe.

Having thus paid Mr. Burke the compliment of remembering him, I return to the ſubject.

From the want of a conſtitution in England, to reſtrain and regulate the wild impulſe of power, many of the laws are irrational and tyrannical, and the adminiſtration of them vague and problematical.

The attention of the government of England (for I rather chuſe to call it by this name, than the Engliſh government) appears, ſince its political connection with Germany, to have been ſo completely engroſſed and abſorbed by foreign affairs, and the means of raiſing taxes, that it ſeems to exiſt for no other purpoſes. Domeſtic concerns are neglected: And, with reſpect to regular law, there is ſcarcely ſuch a thing.

Almoſt every caſe now muſt be determined by ſome precedents, be that precedent good or bad, or whether it properly applies or not; and the practice is become ſo general, as to ſuggeſt a ſuſpiſion, that it proceeds from a deeper policy than at firſt light appears.

Since the revolution of America, and more ſo ſince that of France, this preaching up the doctrine of precedents, drawn from times and circumſtances antecedent to thoſe events, has been the ſtudied practice of the Engliſh government. The generality of thoſe precedents are founded on principles and opinions, the reverſe of what they ought to be; and the greater diſtance of time they are drawn from, the more they are to be ſuſpected. But by aſſociating thoſe precedents with a ſuperſtitious reverence for ancient things, as monks ſhew relics and call them holy, the generality of mankind are deceived into

the design. Governments now act as if they were afraid to awaken a single reflection in man. They are softly leading him to the sepulchre of precedents, to deaden his faculties and call his attention from the scene of revolutions. They feel that he is arriving at knowledge faster than they wish, and their policy of precedents is the barometer of their fears. This political popery, like the ecclesiastical popery of old, has had its day, and is hastening to its exit. The ragged relic and the antiquated precedent, the monk and the monarch, will moulder together.

Government by precedent, without any regard to the principle of the precedent, is one of the vilest systems that can be set up. In numerous instances, the precedent ought to operate as a warning, and not as an example, and requires to be shunned instead of imitated; but instead of this, precedents are taken in the lump and put at once for constitution and for law.

Either the doctrine of precedent is policy to keep a man in a state of ignorance, or it is a practical confession that wisdom degenerates in governments as governments increase in age, and can only hobble along by the stilts and crutches of precedents. How is it that the same persons who would proudly be thought wiser than their predecessors, appear at the same time only as the ghosts of departed wisdom? How strangely is antiquity treated! To answer some purposes it is spoken of as the times of darkness and ignorance, and to answer others it is put for the light of the world.

If the doctrine of precedents is to be followed, the expences of government need not continue the same. Why pay men extravagantly, who have but little to do? If every thing that can happen is already in precedent, legislation is at an end, and precedent, like a dictionary, determines every case. Either, therefore, government has arrived at its dotage, and requires to be renovated, or all the occasions for exercising its wisdom have occurred.

We now see all over Europe, and particularly in England, the curious phenomenon of a nation looking one way, and a government the other—the one forward, and the other backward. If governments are to go on by precedent, while nations go on by improvement, they must at last come to a final separation, and the sooner, and the more civilly, they determine this point, the better.*

* *In England, the improvements in agriculture, useful arts, manufactures, and commerce, have been made in opposition to the genius of its government, which is that of following precedents. It is from the enter-*

Having thus ſpoken of conſtitutions generally, as things diſtinct from actual governments, let us proceed to conſider the parts of which a conſtitution is compoſed.

Opinions differ more on this ſubject, than with reſpect to the whole. That a nation ought to have a conſtitution, as a rule for the conduct of its government, is a ſimple queſtion in which all men, not directly courtiers, will agree. It is only on the component parts that queſtions and opinions multiply

But this difficulty, like every other, will diminiſh when put into a train of being rightly underſtood.

The firſt thing is, that a nation has a right to eſtabliſh a conſtitution.

Whether it exerciſes this right in the moſt judicious manner at firſt, is quite another caſe. It exerciſes it agreeably to the judgment it poſſeſſes; and by continuing to do ſo, all errors will at laſt be exploded.

When this right is eſtabliſhed in a nation, there is no fear that it will be employed to its own injury. A nation can have no intereſt in being wrong.

Though all the conſtitutions of America are on one general principle, yet no two of them are exactly alike in their component parts, or in the diſtribution of the powers which they give to the actual governments. Some are more, and others leſs complex.

In forming a conſtitution, it is firſt neceſſary to conſider what are the ends for which government is neceſſary? Secondly, what are the beſt means, and the leaſt expenſive, for accompliſhing thoſe ends?

Government is nothing more than a national aſſociation; and the object of this aſſociation is the good of all, as well individually as collectively. Every man wiſhes to purſue his occupation, and to enjoy the fruits of his labours, and the produce of his property in peace

prize and induſtry of the individuals, and their numerous aſſociations, in which, tritely ſpeaking, government is neither pillow nor bolſter, that theſe improvements have proceeded. No man thought about the government, or who was in, or who was out, when he was planning or executing thoſe things; and all he had to hope, with reſpect to government, was, that it would let him alone. Three or four very ſilly miniſterial newſpapers are continually offending againſt the ſpirit of national improvement, by aſcribing it to a miniſter. They may with as much truth aſcribe this book to a miniſter.

and ſafety, and with the leaſt poſſible expence. When theſe things are accompliſhed, all the objects for which government ought to be eſtabliſhed are anſwered.

It has been cuſtomary to conſider government under three diſtinct general heads. The legiſlative, the executive, and the judicial.

But if we permit our judgment to act unincumbered by the habit of multiplied terms, we can perceive no more than two diviſions of power, of which civil government is compoſed, namely, that of legiſlating or enacting laws, and that of executing or adminiſtering them. Every thing, therefore, appertaining to civil government, claſſes itſelf under one or other of theſe two diviſions.

So far as regards the execution of the laws, that which is called the judicial power, is ſtrictly and properly the executive power of every country. It is that power to which every individual has appeal, and which cauſes the laws to be executed; neither have we any other clear idea with reſpect to the official execution of the laws. In England, and alſo in America and France, this power begins with the magiſtrate, and proceeds up through all the courts of judicature.

I leave to courtiers to explain what is meant by calling monarchy the executive power. It is merely a name in which acts of government are done; and any other, or none at all, would anſwer the ſame purpoſe. Laws have neither more nor leſs authority on this account. It muſt be from the juſtneſs of their principles, and the intereſt which a nation feels therein, that they derive ſupport; if they require any other than this, it is a ſign that ſomething in the ſyſtem of government is imperfect. Laws difficult to be executed cannot be generally good.

With reſpect to the organization of the *legiſlative power*, different modes have been adopted in different countries. In America it is generally compoſed of two houſes. In France it conſiſts but of one, but in both countries it is wholly by repreſentation.

The caſe is, that mankind (from the long tyranny of aſſumed power) have had ſo few opportunities of making the neceſſary trials on modes and principles of government, in order to diſcover the beſt, *that government is but now beginning to be known*, and experience is yet wanting to determine many particulars.

The objections againſt two houſes are, firſt, that there is an inconſiſtency in any part of a whole legiſlature, coming to a final determination by vote on any matter, whilſt *that matter* with reſpect to *that whole*, is yet only in a train of deliberation, and conſequently open to new illuſtrations.

Secondly, That by taking the vote on each, as a ſeparate body, it always admits of the poſſibility, and is often the caſe in practice, that the minority governs the majority, and that, in ſome inſtances, to a degree of great inconſiſtency.

Thirdly, That two houſes arbitrarily checking or controlling each other, is inconſiſtent; becauſe it cannot be proved, on the principles of juſt repreſentation, that either ſhould be wiſer, or better than the other. They may check in the wrong as well as in the right,—and therefore, to give the power where we cannot give the wiſdom to uſe it, nor be aſſured of its being rightly uſed, renders the hazard at leaſt equal to the precaution.*

The objection againſt a ſingle houſe is, that it is always in a condition of committing itſelf too ſoon. But it ſhould at the ſame time be remembered that when there is a conſtitution which defines the power, and eſtabliſhes the principles within which a legiſlature ſhall

* *With reſpect to the two houſes, of which the Engliſh parliament is compoſed, they appear to be effectually influenced into one, and, as a legiſlature, to have no temper of its own. The miniſter, whoever he at any time may be, touches it as with an opium wand, and it ſleeps obedience.*

But if we look at the diſtinct abilities of the two houſes, the difference will appear ſo great, as to ſhew the inconſiſtency of placing power where there can be no certainty of the judgment to uſe it. Wretched as the ſtate of repreſentation is in England, it is manhood compared with what is called the houſe of lords; and ſo little is this nick-named houſe regarded, that the people ſcarcely inquire at any time what it is doing. It appears alſo to be moſt under influence, and the furtheſt removed from the general intereſt of the nation. In the debate on engaging in the Ruſſian and Turkiſh war, the majority in the houſe of peers in favour of it was upwards of ninety, when in the other houſe, which is more than double its numbers, the majority was ſixty-three.

The proceedings on Mr. Fox's bill, reſpecting the rights of juries, merits alſo to be noticed. The perſons called the peers were not the objects of that bill. They are already in poſſeſſion of more privileges than that bill gave to others. They are their own jury, and if any of that houſe were proſecuted for a libel, he would not ſuffer, even upon conviction, for the firſt offence. Such inequality in laws ought not to exiſt in any country. The French conſtitution ſays, That the law is the ſame to every individual, whether to protect or to puniſh. All are equal in its ſight.

act, there is already a more effectual check provided, and more powerfully operating, than any other check can be. For example,

Were a bill to be brought into any of the American legiſlatures, ſimilar to that which was paſſed into an act by the Engliſh parliament, at the commencement of George the firſt, to extend the duration of the aſſemblies to a longer period than they now ſit, the check is in the conſtitution, which in effect ſays, *Thus far ſhalt thou go, and no farther.*

But in order to remove the objection againſt a ſingle houſe (that of acting with too quick an impulſe) and at the ſame time to avoid the inconſiſtencies, in ſome caſes abſurdities, ariſing from two houſes, the following method has been propoſed as an improvement on both.

Firſt, To have but one repreſentation.

Secondly, To divide that repreſentation, by lot, into two or three parts.

Thirdly, That every propoſed bill ſhall be firſt debated in thoſe parts, by ſucceſſion, that they may become hearers of each other, but without taking any vote. After which the whole repreſentation to aſſemble, for a general debate and determination, by vote.

To this propoſed improvement has been added another, for the purpoſe of keeping the repreſentation in a ſtate of conſtant renovation; which is, that one third of the repreſentation of each county ſhall go out at the expiration of one year, and the number be replaced by new elections.—Another third at the expiration of the ſecond year replaced in like manner, and every third year to be a general election.*

But in whatever manner the ſeparate parts of a conſtitution may be arranged, there is one general principle that diſtinguiſhes freedom from ſlavery, which is, that all *hereditary government over a people is to them a ſpecies of ſlavery, and repreſentative government is freedom.*

Conſidering government in the only light in which it ſhould be conſidered, that of a NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, it ought to be ſo conſtructed as not to be diſordered by any accident happening among the parts; and, therefore, no extraordinary power, capable of producing ſuch an effect, ſhould be lodged in the hands of any individual.

* *As to the ſtate of repreſentation in England, it is too abſurd to be reaſoned upon. Almoſt all the repreſented parts are decreaſing in population, and the unrepreſented parts are increaſing. A general convention of the nation is neceſſary to take the whole ſtate of its government into conſideration.*

The death, ſickneſs, abſence, or defection, of any one individual in a government, ought to be a matter of no more conſequence, with reſpect to the nation, than if the ſame circumſtance had taken place in a member of the Engliſh parliament, or the French national aſſembly.

Scarcely any thing preſents a more degrading character of national greatneſs, than its being thrown into confuſion by any thing happening to, or acted by, an individual; and the ridiculouſneſs of the ſcene is often increaſed by the natural inſignificance of the perſon by whom it is occaſioned. Were a government ſo conſtructed, that it could not go on unleſs a gooſe or a gander were preſent in the ſenate, the difficulties would be juſt as great and as real on the flight or ſickneſs of the gooſe or the gander, as if it were called a king. We laugh at individuals for the ſilly difficulties they make to themſelves, without perceiving, that the greateſt of all ridiculous things are acted in governments.*

All the conſtitutions of America are on a plan that excludes the childiſh embarraſſments which occur in monarchical countries. No ſuſpenſion of government can there take place for a moment, from any circumſtance whatever. The ſyſtem of repreſentation provides for every thing, and is the only ſyſtem in which nations and governments can always appear in their proper character.

As extraordinary power ought not to be lodged in the hands of any individual, ſo ought there to be no appropriations of public

* *It is related, that in the canton of Berne, in Switzerland, it had been cuſtomary, from time immemorial, to keep a bear at the public expence, and the people had been taught to believe, that if they had not a bear, they ſhould all be undone. It happened ſome years ago, that the bear, then in being, was taken ſick, and died too ſuddenly to have his place immediately ſupplied with another. During this interregnum the people diſcovered, that the corn grew, and the vintage flouriſhed, and the ſun and moon continued to riſe and ſet, and every thing went on the ſame as before, and, taking courage from theſe circumſtances, they reſolved not to keep any more bears; for, ſaid they, "a bear is a very voracious, expenſive animal, "and we were obliged to pull out his claws, leſt he ſhould hurt the "citizens."*

The ſtory of the bear of Berne was related in ſome of the French news-papers, at the time of the flight of Louis XVI. and the application of it to monarchy could not be miſtaken in France; but it ſeems, that the ariſtocracy of Berne applied it to themſelves, and have ſince prohibited the reading of French news-papers.

money to any perſon, beyond what his ſervices in a ſtate may be worth. It ſignifies not whether a man be called a preſident, a king, an emperor, a ſenator, or by any other name, which propriety or folly may deviſe, or arrogance aſſume; it is only a certain ſervice he can perform in the ſtate; and the ſervice of any ſuch individual in the rotine of office, whether ſuch office be called monarchical, preſidential, ſenatorial, or by another, name or title, can never exceed the value of ten thouſand pounds a year. All the great ſervices that are done in the world are performed by volunteer characters, who accept nothing for them; but the rotine of office is always regulated to ſuch a general ſtandard of abilities as to be within the compaſs of numbers in every country to perform, and therefore cannot merit very extraordinary recompence. *Government*, ſays Swift, *is a plain thing, and fitted to the capacity of many heads.*

It is inhuman to talk of a million ſterling a year, paid out of the public taxes of any country, for the ſupport of any individual, whilſt thouſands who are forced to contribute thereto, are pining with want, and ſtruggling with miſery. Government does not conſiſt in a contraſt between priſons and palaces, between poverty and pomp; it is not inſtituted to rob the needy of his mite, and increaſe the wretchedneſs of the wretched.—But of this part of the ſubject I ſhall ſpeak hereafter, and confine myſelf at preſent to political obſervations.

When extraordinary power and extraordinary pay are allotted to any individual in a government, he becomes the centre, round which every kind of corruption generates and forms. Give to any man a million a year, and add thereto the power of creating and diſpoſing of places, at the expence of a country, and the liberties of that country are no longer ſecure. What is called the ſplendour of a throne, is no other than the corruption of the ſtate. It is made up of a band of paraſites, living in luxurious indolence, out of the public taxes.

When once ſuch a vicious ſyſtem is eſtabliſhed, it becomes the guard and protection of all inferior abuſes. The man who is in the receipt of a million a year is the laſt perſon to promote a ſpirit of reform, leſt, in the event, it ſhould reach to himſelf. It is always his intereſt to defend inferior abuſes, as ſo many out-works to protect the citadel; and in this ſpecies of political fortification, all the parts have ſuch a common dependence, that it is never to be expected they will attack each other.*

* *It is ſcarcely poſſible to touch on any ſubject, that will not ſuggeſt a*

Monarchy would not have continued ſo many ages in the world, had it not been for the abuſes it protects. It is the maſter-fraud, which ſhelters all others. By admitting a participation of the ſpoil, it makes itſelf friends; and when it ceaſes to do this, it will ceaſe to be the idol of courtiers.

As the principle on which conſtitutions are now formed rejects all hereditary pretenſions to government, it alſo rejects all that catalogue of aſſumptions known by the name of prerogatives.

If there is any governement where prerogatives might with apparent ſafety be intruſted to any individual, it is in the federal government of America. The preſident of the United States of America is elected only for four years. He is not only reſponſible in the general ſenſe of the word, but a particular mode is laid down in the conſtitution for trying him. He cannot be elected under thirty-five years of age; and he muſt be a native of the country.

In a compariſon of theſe caſes with the government of England, the difference, when applied to the latter, amounts to an abſurdity. In England, the perſon who exerciſes prerogative is often a foreigner;

alluſion to ſome corruption in governments. The ſimile of "fortifications," *unfortunately involves with it a circumſtance, which is directly in point with the matter above alluded to.*

Among the numerous inſtances of abuſe which have been acted or protected by governments, ancient or modern, there is not a greater than that of quartering a man and his heirs upon the public, to be maintained at its expence.

Humanity dictates a proviſion for the poor; but by what right, moral or political, does any government aſſume to ſay, that the perſon called the duke of Richmond, ſhall be maintained by the public? Yet, if common report is true, not a beggar in London can purchaſe his wretched pittance of coal, without paying towards the civil liſt of the duke of Richmond. Were the whole produce of this impoſition but a ſhilling a year, the iniquitous principle would be ſtill the ſame; but when it amounts, as it is ſaid to do, to not leſs than twenty thouſand pounds per ann. *the enormity is too ſerious to be permitted to remain.---This is one of the effects of monarchy and ariſtocracy.*

In ſtating this caſe, I am led by no perſonal diſlike. Though I think it mean in any man to live upon the public, the vice originates in the government; and ſo general is it become, that whether the parties are in the miniſtry or in the oppoſition, it makes no difference; they are ſure of the guarantee of each other.

always half a foreigner, and always married to a foreigner. He is never in full natural or political connection with the country, is not responsible for any thing, and becomes of age at eighteen years; yet such a person is permitted to form foreign alliances, without even the knowledge of the nation; and to make war and peace without its consent.

But this is not all. Though such a person cannot dispose of the government, in the manner of a testator, he dictates the marriage connections, which, in effect, accomplishes a great part of the same end. He cannot directly bequeath half the government to Prussia, but he can form a marriage partnership that will produce almost the same thing. Under such circumstances, it is happy for England that she is not situated on the continent, or she might, like Holland, fall under the dictatorship of Prussia. Holland, by marriage, is as effectually governed by Prussia, as if the old tyranny of bequeathing the government had been the means.

The presidency in America (or, as it is sometimes called, the executive) is the only office from which a foreigner is excluded; and in England it is the only one to which he is admitted. A foreigner cannot be a member of parliament, but he may be what is called a king. If there is any reason for excluding foreigners, it ought to be from those offices where mischief can be most acted, and where, by uniting every bias of interest and attachment, the trust is best secured.

But as nations proceed in the great business of forming constitutions, they will examine with more precision into the nature and business of that department which is called the executive. What the legislative and judicial departments are, every one can see; but with respect to what, in Europe, is called the executive, as distinct from those two, it is either a political superfluity or a chaos of unknown things.

Some kind of official department, to which reports shall be made from the different parts of a nation, or from abroad, to be laid before the national representatives, is all that is necessary; but there is no consistency in calling this the executive; neither can it be considered in any other light than as inferior to the legislative. The sovereign authority in any country is the power of making laws, and every thing else is an official department.

Next to the arrangement of the principles and the organization of the several parts of a constitution, is the provision to be made for the support of the persons to whom the nation shall confide the administration of the constitutional powers.

A nation can have no right to the time and ſervices of any perſon at his own expence, whom it may chooſe to employ or intruſt in any department whatever; neither can any reaſon be given for making proviſion for the ſupport of any one part of a government and not for the other.

But, admitting that the honour of being intruſted with any part of a government, is to be conſidered a ſufficient reward, it ought to be ſo to every perſon alike. If the members of the legiſlature of any country are to ſerve at their own expence, that which is called the executive, whether monarchical, or by any other name, ought to ſerve in like manner. It is inconſiſtent to pay the one, and accept the ſervice of the other gratis.

In America every department in the government, is decently provided for; but no one is extravagantly paid. Every member of congreſs, and of the aſſemblies, it allowed a ſufficiency for his expences. Whereas in England, a moſt prodigal proviſion is made for the ſupport of one part of the government, and none for the other; the conſequence of which is, that the one it furniſhed with the means of corruption, and the other is put into the condition of being corrupted. Leſs than a fourth part of ſuch expence, applied as it is in America, would remedy a great part of the corruption.

Another reform in the American conſtitutions, is the exploding all oaths of perſonality. The oath of allegiance in America is to the nation only. The putting any individual as a figure for a nation is improper. The happineſs of a nation is the ſuperior object, and therefore the intention of an oath of allegiance ought not to be obſcured by being figuratively taken, to, or in the name of, any perſon. The oath, called the civic oath, in France, viz. the "*nation, the law, "and the king,*" is improper. If taken at all, it ought to be as in America, to the nation only. The law may or may not be good; but, in this place, it can have no other meaning, than as being conducive to the happineſs of the nation, and therefore is included in it. The remainder of the oath is improper, on the ground, that all perſonal oaths ought to be aboliſhed. They are the remains of tyranny on one part, and ſlavery on the other; and the name of the CREATOR ought not to be introduced to witneſs the degradation of his creation; or if taken, as is already mentioned, as figurative of the nation, it is in this place redundant. But whatever apology may be made for oaths at the firſt eſtabliſhment of a government, they ought not to be permitted afterwards. If a government requires the ſupport of oaths, it is a ſign that it is not worth ſupporting, and ought not to

be ſupported. Make government what it ought to be, and it will ſupport itſelf.

To conclude this part of the ſubject:—One of the greateſt improvements that has been made for the perpetual ſecurity and progreſs of conſtitutional liberty, is the proviſion which the new conſtitutions make for occaſionally reviſing, altering, and amending them.

The principle upon which Mr. Burke formed his political creed, that "*of binding and controlling poſterity to the end of time, and renouncing and abdicating the rights of all poſterity for ever,*" is now become too deteſtable to be made a ſubject of debate; and, therefore, I paſs it over with no other notice than expoſing it.

Government is but now beginning to be known. Hitherto it has been the mere exerciſe of power, which forbad all effectual enquiry into rights, and grounded itſelf wholly on poſſeſſion. While the enemy of liberty was its judge, the progreſs of its principles muſt have been ſmall indeed.

The conſtitutions of America, and alſo that of France, have either affixed a period for their reviſion, or laid down the mode by which improvements ſhall be made. It is perhaps impoſſible to eſtabliſh any thing that combines principles with opinions and practice, which the progreſs of circumſtances, through a length of years, will not in ſome meaſure derange, or render inconſiſtent; and, therefore, to prevent inconveniences accumulating, till they diſcourage reformations or provoke revolutions, it is beſt to provide the means of regulating them as they occur. The Rights of Man are the rights of all generations of men, and cannot be monopolized by any. That which is worth following, will be followed for the ſake of its worth; and it is in this that its ſecurity lies, and not in any conditions with which it may be encumbered. When a man leaves property to his heirs, he does not connect it with an obligation that they ſhall accept it. Why then ſhould we do otherwiſe with reſpect to conſtitutions?

The beſt conſtitution that could now be deviſed, conſiſtent with the condition of the preſent moment, may be far ſhort of that excellence which a few years may afford. There is a morning of reaſon riſing upon man on the ſubject of government, that has not appeared before. As the barbariſm of the preſent old governments expires, the moral condition of nations, with reſpect to each other, will be changed. Man will not be brought up with the ſavage idea of conſidering his ſpecies as his enemy, becauſe the accident of birth gave the individuals exiſtence in countries diſtinguiſhed by different names; and as conſtitutions have always ſome relation to external as well as

to domeſtic circumſtances, the means of benefitting by every change, foreign or domeſtic, ſhould be a part of every conſtitution.

We already ſee an alteration in the national diſpoſition of England and France towards each other, which, when we look back to only a few years, is itſelf a revolution. Who could have foreſeen, or who would have believed, that a French National Aſſembly would ever have been a popular toaſt in England, or that a friendly alliance of the two nations ſhould become the wiſh of either? It ſhews, that man, were he not corrupted by governments, is naturally the friend of man, and that human nature is not of itſelf vicious. That ſpirit of jealouſy and ferocity, which the governments of the two countries inſpired, and which they rendered ſubſervient to the purpoſe of taxation, is now yielding to the dictates of reaſon, intereſt, and humanity. The trade of courts is beginning to be underſtood, and the affectation of myſtery, with all the artificial ſorcery by which they impoſed upon mankind, is on the decline. It has received its death-wound; and though it may linger, it will expire.

Government ought to be as much open to improvement as any thing which appertains to man, inſtead of which it has been monopolized from age to age, by the moſt ignorant and vicious of the human race. Need we any other proof of their wretched management, than the exceſs of debts and taxes with which every nation groans, and the quarrels into which they have precipitated the world?

Juſt emerging from ſuch a barbarous condition, it is too ſoon to determine to what extent of improvement government may yet be carried. For what we can foreſee, all Europe may form but one great republic, and man be free of the whole.

CHAP. V.

WAYS AND MEANS OF IMPROVING THE CONDITION OF EUROPE, INTERSPERSED WITH MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

IN contemplating a ſubject that embraces with equatorial magnitude the whole region of humanity, it is impoſſible to confine the purſuit in one ſingle direction. It takes ground on every character and condition that appertains to man, and blends the individual, the nation, and the world.

From a ſmall ſpark kindled in America, a flame has ariſen, not to

be extinguiſhed. Without conſuming, like the *ultima ratio regum*, it winds its progreſs from nation to nation, and conquers by a ſilent operation. Man finds himſelf changed, he ſcarcely perceives how. He acquires a knowledge of his rights by attending juſtly to his intereſt, and diſcovers in the event that the ſtrength and powers of deſpotiſm conſiſt wholly in the fear of reſiſting it, and that, in order "*to be free, it is ſufficient that he wills it.*"

Having in all the preceding parts of this work endeavoured to eſtabliſh a ſyſtem of principles as a baſis on which governments ought to be erected; I ſhall proceed in this, to the ways and means of rendering them into practice. But in order to introduce this part of the ſubject with more propriety, and ſtronger effect, ſome preliminary obſervations, deducible from, or connected with, thoſe principles, are neceſſary.

Whatever the form or conſtitution of government may be, it ought to have no other object than the *general* happineſs. When, inſtead of this, it operates to create and increaſe wretchedneſs in any of the parts of ſociety, it is on a wrong ſyſtem, and reformation is neceſſary.

Cuſtomary language has claſſed the condition of man under the two deſcriptions of civilized and uncivilized life. To the one it has aſcribed felicity and affluence; to the other, hardſhip and want. But however our imagination may be impreſſed by painting and compariſon, it is nevertheleſs true, that a great portion of mankind, in what are called civilized countries, are in a ſtate of poverty and wretchedneſs far below the condition of an Indian. I ſpeak not of one country, but of all. It is ſo in England, it is ſo all over Europe. Let us enquire into the cauſe.

It lies not in any natural defect in the principles of civilization, but in preventing thoſe principles having an univerſal operation; the conſequence of which is, a perpetual ſyſtem of war and expence, that drains the country, and defeats the general felicity of which civilization is capable.

All the European governments (France now excepted) are conſtructed, not on the principle of univerſal civilization, but on the reverſe of it. So far as thoſe governments relate to each other, they are in the ſame condition as we conceive of ſavage uncivilized life; they put themſelves beyond the law as well of GOD as of man, and are, with reſpect to principle and reciprocal conduct, like ſo many individuals in a ſtate of nature.

The inhabitants of every country, under the civilization of laws, eaſily civilize together; but governments being yet in an uncivilized

ſtate, and almoſt continually at war, they pervert the abundance which civilized life produces, to carry on the uncivilized part to a greater extent. By thus engrafting the barbariſm of government upon the internal civilization of a country, it draws from the latter, and more eſpecially from the poor, a great portion of thoſe earnings, which ſhould be applied to their own ſubſiſtence and comfort.—Apart from all reflections of morality and philoſophy, it is a melancholy fact, that more than one-fourth of the labour of mankind is annually conſumed by this barbarous ſyſtem.

What has ſerved to continue this evil, is the pecuniary advantage, which all the governments of Europe have found in keeping up this ſtate of uncivilization It affords to them pretences for power and revenue, for which there would be neither occaſion nor apology, if the circle of civilization were rendered compleat. Civil government alone, or the government of laws, is not productive of pretences for many taxes; it operates at home, directly under the eye of the country, and precludes the poſſibility of much impoſition. But when the ſcene is laid in the uncivilized contention of governments, the field of pretences is enlarged, and the country, being no longer a judge, is open to every impoſition which governments pleaſe to act.

Not a thirtieth, ſcarcely a fortieth part, of the taxes which are raiſed in England, are either occaſioned by, or applied to, the purpoſes of civil government. It is not difficult to ſee, that the whole which the actual government does in this reſpect, is to enact laws, and that the country adminiſters and executes them, at its own expence, by means of magiſtrates, juries, ſeſſions, and aſſize, over and above the taxes which it pays.

In this view of the caſe, we have two diſtinct characters of government; the one, the civil government, or the government of laws, which operates at home; the other, the court or cabinet government, which operates abroad on the rude plan of uncivilized life; the one attended with little charge, the other with boundleſs extravagance; and ſo diſtinct are the two, that if the latter were to ſink, as it were by a ſudden opening of the earth, and totally diſappear, the former would not be deranged. It would ſtill proceed, becauſe it is the common intereſt of the nation that it ſhould, and all the means are in practice.

Revolutions, then, have for their object, a change in the moral condition of governments, and with this change the burden of public taxes will leſſen, and civilization will be left to the enjoyment of that abundance, of which it is now deprived.

In contemplating the whole of this ſubject, I extend my views into the department of commerce. In all my publications, where the matter would admit, I have been an advocate for commerce, becauſe I am a friend to its effects. It is a pacific ſyſtem, operating to cordialize mankind, by rendering nations, as well as individuals, uſeful to each other. As to mere theoretical reformation, I have never preached it up. The moſt effectual proceſs is that of improving the condition of man by means of his intereſt; and it is on this ground that I take my ſtand.

If commerce were permitted to act to the univerſal extent it is capable, it would extirpate the ſyſtem of war, and produce a revolution in the uncivilized ſtate of governments. The invention of commerce has ariſen ſince thoſe governments began, and is the greateſt approach towards univerſal civilization, that has yet been made by any means not immediately flowing from moral principles.

Whatever has a tendency to promote the civil intercourſe of nations, by an exchange of benefits, is a ſubject as worthy of philoſophy as of politics. Commerce is no other than the traffic of two individuals, multiplied on a ſcale of numbers; and by the ſame rule that nature intended the intercourſe of two, ſhe intended that of all. For this purpoſe ſhe has diſtributed the materials of manufactures and commerce, in various and diſtant parts of a nation and of the world; and as they cannot be procured by war ſo cheaply or ſo commodiouſly as by commerce, ſhe has rendered the latter the means of extirpating the former.

As the two are nearly the oppoſites of each other, conſequently, the uncivilized ſtate of European governments is injurious to commerce. Every kind of deſtruction or embarraſſment ſerves to leſſen the quantity, and it matters but little in what part of the commercial world the reduction begins. Like blood, it cannot be taken from any of the parts, without being taken from the whole maſs in circulation, and all partake of the loſs. When the ability in any nation to buy is deſtroyed, it equally involves the ſeller. Could the government of England deſtroy the commerce of all other nations, ſhe would moſt effectually ruin her own.

It is poſſible that a nation may be the carrier for the world, but ſhe cannot be the merchant. She cannot be the ſeller and the buyer of her own merchandize. The ability to buy muſt reſide out of herſelf; and, therefore, the proſperity of any commercial nation is regulated by the proſperity of the reſt. If they are poor, ſhe cannot

be rich; and her condition, be it what it may, is an index of the height of the commercial tide in other nations.

That the principles of commerce, and its univerſal operation may be underſtood, without underſtanding the practice, is a poſition that reaſon will not deny; and it is on this ground only that I argue the ſubject. It is one thing in the counting-houſe, in the world it is another. With reſpect to its operation, it muſt neceſſarily be contemplated as a reciprocal thing, that only one half its powers reſides within the nation, and that the whole is as effectually deſtroyed by deſtroying the half that reſides without, as if the deſtruction had been committed on that which is within, for neither can act without the other.

When in the laſt, as well as in former wars, the commerce of England ſunk, it was becauſe the general quantity was leſſened every where; and it now riſes, becauſe commerce is in a riſing ſtate in every nation. If England, at this day, imports and exports more than at any former period, the nation with which ſhe trades muſt neceſſarily do the ſame; her imports are their exports, and *vice verſa*.

There can be no ſuch thing as a nation flouriſhing alone in commerce; ſhe can only participate; and the deſtruction of it in any part muſt neceſſarily affect all. When, therefore, governments are at war, the attack is made upon the common ſtock of commerce, and the conſequence is the ſame as if each had attacked his own.

The preſent increaſe of commerce is not to be attributed to miniſters, or to any political contrivances, but to its own natural operations in conſequence of peace. The regular markets had been deſtroyed, the channels of trade broken up, the high road of the ſeas infeſted with robbers of every nation, and the attention of the world called to other objects. Thoſe interruptions have ceaſed, and peace has reſtored the deranged condition of things to their proper order.*

It is worth remarking, that every nation reckons the balance of

* *In America, the increaſe of commerce is greater in proportion than in England. It is, at this time, at leaſt one half more than at any period prior to the revolution. The greateſt number of veſſels cleared out of the port of Philadelphia, before the commencement of the war, was between eight and nine hundred. In the year* 1788, *the number was upwards of twelve hundred. As the ſtate of Pennſylvania is eſtimated as an eighth part of the United States in population, the whole number of veſſels muſt now be nearly ten thouſand.*

trade in its own favour; and therefore something must be irregular in the common ideas upon this subject.

The fact, however, is true, according to what is called a balance; and it is from this cause that commerce is universally supported. Every nation feels the advantage, or it would abandon the practice: But the deception lies in the mode of making up the accounts, and in attributing what are called profits to a wrong cause.

Mr. Pitt has sometimes amused himself, by shewing what he called a balance of trade from the custom-house books. This mode of calculation, not only affords no rule that is true, but one that is false.

In the first place, every cargo that departs from the custom house, appears on the books as an export; and according to the custom-house balance, the losses at sea, and by foreign failures, are all reckoned on the side of the profit, because they appear as exports.

Secondly, Because the importation by the smuggling trade does not appear on the custom-house books, to arrange against the exports.

No balance, therefore, as applying to superior advantages, can be drawn from these documents; and if we examine the natural operation of commerce, the idea is fallacious; and if true, would soon be injurious. The great support of commerce consists in the balance being a level of benefits among all nations.

Two merchants of different nations trading together, will both become rich, and each makes the balance in his own favour; consequently, they do not get rich out of each other; and it is the same with respect to the nations in which they reside. The case must be, that each nation must get rich out of its own means, and increase that riches by something which it procures from another in exchange.

If a merchant in England sends an article of English manufacture abroad, which costs him a shilling at home, and imports something which sells for two, he makes a balance of one shilling in his own favour: But this is not gained out of the foreign nation or the foreign merchant, for he also does the same by the article he receives, and neither has a balance of advantage upon the other. The original value of the two articles in their proper countries were but two shillings; but by changing their places, they acquire a new idea of value, equal to double what they had at first, and that increased value is equally divided.

There is no otherwise a balance on foreign than on domestic commerce. The merchants of London and Newcastle trade on the same principles, as if they resided in different nations, and make their balances in the same manner: Yet London does not get rich out of

Newcaſtle, any more than Newcaſtle out of London: But coals, the merchandize of Newcaſtle, have an additional value at London, and London merchandize has the ſame at Newcaſtle.

Though the principle of all commerce is the ſame, the domeſtic, in a national view, is the part the moſt beneficial; becauſe the whole of the advantages, on both ſides, reſt within the nation; whereas, in foreign commerce, it is only a participation of one half.

The moſt unprofitable of all commerce is that connected with foreign dominion. To a few individuals it may be beneficial, merely becauſe it is commerce; but to the nation it is a loſs. The expence of maintaining dominion more than abſorbs the profits of any trade. It does not increaſe the general quantity in the world, but operates to leſſen it; and as a greater maſs would be afloat by relinquiſhing dominion, the participation without the expence would be more valuable than a greater quantity with it.

But it is impoſſible to ingroſs commerce by dominion; and therefore it is ſtill more fallacious. It cannot exiſt in confined channels, and neceſſarily breaks out by regular or irregular means that defeat the attempt and to ſucceed would be ſtill worſe. France, ſince the revolution, has been more than indifferent as to foreign poſſeſſions; and other nations will become the ſame, when they inveſtigate the ſubject with reſpect to commerce.

To the expence of dominion is to be added that of navies, and when the amount of the two is ſubtracted from the profits of commerce, it will appear, that what is called the balance of trade, even admitting it to exiſt, is not enjoyed by the nation, but abſorbed by the government.

The idea of having navies for the protection of commerce, is deluſive. It is putting the means of deſtruction for the means of protection. Commerce needs no other protection than the reciprocal intereſt which every nation feels in ſupporting it—it is common ſtock—it exiſts by a balance of advantages to all; and the only interruption it meets, is from the preſent uncivilized ſtate of governments, and which it is its common intereſt to reform.*

When I ſaw Mr. Pitt's mode of eſtimating the balance of trade, in one of his parliamentary ſpeeches, he appeared to me to know nothing of the nature and intereſt of commerce; and no man has more wantonly tortured it than himſelf. During a period of peace, it has been havocked with the calamities of war. Three times has it been thrown into ſtagnation, and the veſſels unmanned by impreſſing, within leſs than four years of peace.

Quitting this ſubject, I now proceed to other matters.—As it is neceſſary to include England in the proſpect of a general reformation, it is proper to enquire into the defects of its government. It is only by each nation reforming its own, that the whole can be improved, and the full benefit of reformation enjoyed. Only partial advantages can flow from partial reforms.

France and England are the only two countries in Europe where a reformation in government could have ſucceſsfully begun. The one ſecure by the ocean, and the other by the immenſity of its internal ſtrength, could defy the malignancy of foreign deſpotiſm. But it is with revolutions as with commerce, the advantages increaſe by their becoming general, and double to either what each would receive alone.

As a new ſyſtem is now opening to the view of the world, the European courts are plotting to counteract it. Alliances, contrary to all former ſyſtems, are agitating, and a common intereſt of courts is forming againſt the common intereſt of man. The combination draws a line that runs throughout Europe, and preſents a cauſe ſo entirely new, as to exclude all calculations from former circumſtances. While deſpotiſm warred with deſpotiſm, man had no intereſt in the conteſt; but in a cauſe that unites the ſoldier with the citizen, and nation with nation, the deſpotiſm of courts, though it feels the danger, and meditates revenge is afraid to ſtrike.

No queſtion has ariſen within the records of hiſtory that preſſed with the importance of the preſent. It is not whether this or that party ſhall be in or out, or whig or tory, or high or low ſhall prevail; but whether man ſhall inherit his rights, and univerſal civilization take place? Whether the fruits of his labour ſhall be enjoyed by himſelf, or conſumed by the profligacy of governments? Whether robbery ſhall be baniſhed from courts, and wretchedneſs from countries?

When, in countries that are called civilized, we ſee age going to the work-houſe, and youth to the gallows, ſomething muſt be wrong in the ſyſtem of government. It would ſeem, by the exterior appearance of ſuch countries, that all was happineſs; but there lies hidden from the eye of common obſervation, a maſs of wretchedneſs that has ſcarcely any other chance, than to expire in poverty or infamy. Its entrance into life is marked with the preſage of its fate; and until this is remedied, it is in vain to puniſh.

Civil government does not exiſt in executions; but in making that proviſion for the inſtruction of youth, and the ſupport of age, as to exclude, as much as poſſible, profligacy from the one, and deſpair

from the other. Inſtead of this, the reſources of a country are laviſhed upon kings, upon courts, upon hirelings, impoſtors and proſtitutes; and even the poor themſelves, with all their wants upon them, are compelled to ſupport the fraud that oppreſſes them.

Why is it, that ſcarcely any are executed but the poor? The fact is a proof, among other things, of a wretchedneſs in their condition. Bred up without morals, and caſt upon the world without a proſpect, they are the expoſed ſacrifice of vice and legal barbarity. The millions that are ſuperfluouſly waſted upon governments are more than ſufficient to reform thoſe evils, and to benefit the condition of every man in a nation, not included within the purlieus of a court. This I hope to make appear in the progreſs of this work.

It is the nature of compaſſion to aſſociate with misfortune. In taking up this ſubject I ſeek no recompence—I fear no conſequence. Fortified with that proud integrity, that diſdains to triumph or to yield, I will advocate the rights of man.

It is to my advantage that I have ſerved an apprenticeſhip to life. I know the value of moral inſtruction, and I have ſeen the danger of the contrary.

At an early period, little more than ſixteen years of age, raw and adventurous, and heated with the falſe heroiſm of a maſter * who had ſerved in a man of war, I began the carver of my own fortune, and entered on board the Terrible privateer, captain Death. From this adventure I was happily prevented by the affectionate and moral remonſtrance of a good father, who, from his own habits of life, being of the Quaker profeſſion, muſt begin to look upon me as loſt. But the impreſſion, much as it effected at the time, began to wear away, and I entered afterwards in the King of Pruſſia privateer, captain Mendez, and went with her to ſea. Yet, from ſuch a beginning, and with all the inconvenience of early life againſt me, I am proud to ſay, that with a perſeverance undiſmayed by difficulties, a diſintereſtedneſs that compelled reſpect, I have not only contributed to raiſe a new empire in the world, founded on a new ſyſtem of government, but I have arrived at an eminence in political literature, the moſt difficult of all lines to ſucceed and excel in, which ariſtocracy, with all its aids, has not been able to reach or to rival.

Knowing my own heart, and feeling myſelf, as I now do, ſuperior to all the ſkirmiſh of party, the inveteracy of intereſted or miſ-

* *Rev. William Knowles, maſter of the grammar ſchool of Thetford, in Norfolk.*

taken opponents, I anſwer not to falſehood or abuſe, but proceed to the defects of the Engliſh government.*

* *Politics and ſelf-intereſt have been ſo uniformly connected, that the world, from being ſo often deceived, has a right to be ſuſpicious of public characters: but with regard to myſelf, I am perfectly eaſy on this head. I did not at my firſt ſetting out in public life, nearly ſeventeen years ago, turn my thoughts to ſubjects of government from motives of intereſt; and my conduct from that moment to this, proves the fact. I ſaw an opportunity, in which I thought I could do ſome good, and I followed exactly what my heart dictated. I neither read books, nor ſtudied other people's opinions. I thought for myſelf. The caſe was this:*

During the ſuſpenſion of the old governments in America, both prior to, and at the breaking out of hoſtilities, I was ſtruck with the order and decorum with which every thing was conducted; and impreſſed with the idea, that a little more than what ſociety naturally performed, was all the government that was neceſſary; and that monarchy and ariſtocracy were frauds and impoſitions upon mankind. On theſe principles I publiſhed the pamphlet Common Senſe. *The ſucceſs it met with was beyond any thing ſince the invention of printing. I gave the copy right up to every ſtate in the union, and the demand ran to not leſs than one hundred thouſand copies. I continued the ſubject in the ſame manner, under the title of* The Criſis, *till the complete eſtabliſhment of the revolution.*

After the declaration of independence, Congreſs unanimouſly, and unknown to me, appointed me ſecretary in the foreign department. This was agreeable to me, becauſe it gave me the opportunity of ſeeing into the abilities of foreign courts, and their manner of doing buſineſs. But a miſunderſtanding ariſing between Congreſs and me, reſpecting one of their commiſſioners, then in Europe, Mr. Silas Deane, I reſigned the office, and declined, at the ſame time, the pecuniary offers made me by the miniſters of France and Spain, M. Gerard and Don Juan Mirralles.

I had by this time ſo completely gained the ear and confidence of America, and my own independence was become ſo viſible as to give me a range in political writing, beyond, perhaps, what any man ever poſſeſſed in any country; and what is more extraordinary, I held it undiminiſhed to the end of the war, and enjoy it in the ſame manner to the preſent moment. As my object was not myſelf, I ſet out with a determination, and happily with the diſpoſition, of not being moved by praiſe or cenſure, friendſhip or calumny, nor of being drawn from my purpoſe by any perſonal altercation: The man who cannot do this, is not fit for a public character.

When the war ended, I went from Philadelphia to Bordentown, on

I begin with charters and corporations.

It is a perverſion of terms to ſay, that a charter gives rights. It operates by a contrary effect, that of taking rights away. Rights are inherently in all the inhabitants; but charters, by annulling thoſe rights in the majority, leave the right by excluſion in the hands of a

the eaſt bank of the Delaware, where I have a ſmall place. Congreſs was at this time at Prince-Town, fifteen miles diſtant; and General Waſhington had taken his head-quarters at Rocky-Hill, within the neighbourhood of Congreſs, for the purpoſe of reſigning up his commiſſion (the object for which he accepted it being accompliſhed,) and of retiring to private life. While he was on this buſineſs, he wrote me the letter which I here ſubjoin.

Rocky-Hill, Sept. 10, 1783.

I have learned ſince I have been at this place, that you are at Bordentown. Whether for the ſake of retirement or economy, I know not. Be it for either, for both, or whatever it may, if you will come to this place, and partake with me, I ſhall be exceedingly happy to ſee you at it.

Your preſence may remind Congreſs of your paſt ſervices to this country; and if it is in my power to impreſs them, command my beſt exertions with freedom, as they will be rendered chearfully by one, who entertains a lively ſenſe of the importance of your works, and who, with much pleaſure, ſubſcribes himſelf,

Your ſincere friend,

G. WASHINGTON.

During the war in the latter end of the year 1780, *I formed to myſelf a deſign of coming over to England; and communicated it to General Greene, who was then in Philadelphia, on his route to the ſouthward, General Waſhington being then at too great a diſtance to communicate with immediately. I was ſtrongly impreſſed with the idea, that if I could get over to England, without being known, and only remain in ſafety till I could get out a publication, that I could open the eyes of the country with reſpect to the madneſs and ſtupidity of its government. I ſaw that the parties in Parliament had pitted themſelves as far as they could go, and could make no new impreſſions on each other. General Greene entered fully into my views; but the affair of Arnold and Andre happening juſt after, he changed his mind, and, under ſtrong apprehenſions for my ſafety, wrote very preſſingly to me from Annapolis, in Maryland, to give up the deſign, which, with ſome reluctance, I did. Soon after this I accompanied Colonel Laurens, ſon of Mr. Laurens, who was then in the Tower, to France, on buſineſs from Congreſs. We landed at L'Orient; and while I remained there, he being gone forward, a circumſtance occurred, that renewed*

few. If charters were conſtructed ſo as to expreſs in direct terms, "*that every inhabitant, who is not a member of a corporation, ſhall not "exerciſe the right of voting*," ſuch charters would in the face be charters, not of rights, but of excluſion. The effect is the ſame under the form they now ſtand; and the only perſons on whom they operate, are the perſons whom they exclude. Thoſe whoſe rights are guaranteed, by not being taken away, exerciſe no other rights, than as members of the community they are entitled to without a charter; and therefore, all charters have no other than an indirect negative operation. They do not give rights to A, but they make a difference in favour of A by taking away the right of B, and conſequently are inſtruments of injuſtice.

But charters and corporations have a more extenſive evil effect, than what relates merely to elections. They are ſources of endleſs contention in the places where they exiſt; and they leſſen the common rights of national ſociety. A native of England, under the operation of theſe charters and corporations, cannot be ſaid to be an Engliſhman in the full ſenſe of the word. He is not free of the nation, in the

my former deſign. An Engliſh packet from Falmouth to New-York, with the government diſpatches on board, was brought into L'Orient. That a packet ſhould be taken, is no extraordinary thing; but that the diſpatches ſhould be taken with it, will ſcarcely be credited, as they are always ſlung at the cabin window, in a bag loaded with cannon ball, and ready to be ſunk at a moment. The fact, however, is as I have ſtated it, for the diſpatches came into my hands, and I read them. The capture, as I was informed, ſucceeded by the following ſtratagem:—The captain of the Madame privateer, who ſpoke Engliſh, on coming up with the packet, paſſed himſelf for the captain of an Engliſh frigate, and invited the captain of the packet on board, which, when done, he ſent ſome of his own hands back, and ſecured the mail. But be the circumſtance of the capture what it may, I ſpeak with certainty as to the government diſpatches. They were ſent up to Paris, to Count Vergennes, and when Colonel Laurens and myſelf returned to America, we took the originals to Congreſs.

By theſe diſpatches I ſaw into the ſtupidity of the Engliſh cabinet, far more than I otherwiſe could have done, and I renewed my former deſign. But Colonel Laurens was ſo unwilling to return alone, more eſpecially, as among other matters, we had a charge of upwards of two hundred thouſand pounds ſterling in money, that I gave into his wiſhes, and finally gave up my plan. But I am now certain, that if I could have executed it, that it would not have been altogether unſucceſsful.

ſame manner that a Frenchman is free of France, and an American of America. His rights are circumſcribed to the town, and, in ſome caſes, to the pariſh of his birth; and all other parts, though in his native land, are to him as a foreign country. To acquire a reſidence in theſe, he muſt undergo a local naturalization by purchaſe, or he is forbidden or expelled the place. This ſpecies of feudality is kept up to aggrandize the corporations at the ruin of towns; and the effect is viſible.

The generality of corporation towns are in a ſtate of ſolitary decay, and prevented from further ruin, only by ſome circumſtance in their ſituation, ſuch as a navigable river, or a plentiful ſurrounding country. As population is one of the chief ſources of wealth (for without it land itſelf has no value), every thing which operates to prevent it muſt leſſen the value of property; and as corporations have not only this tendency, but directly this effect, they cannot but be injurious. If any policy were to be followed, inſtead of that of general freedom, to every perſon to ſettle where he choſe (as in France or America), it would be more conſiſtent to give encouragement to new comers, than to preclude their admiſſion by exacting premiums from them.*

The perſons moſt immediately intereſted in the abolition of corporations, are the inhabitants of the towns where corporations are eſtabliſhed. The inſtances of Mancheſter, Birmingham, and Sheffield, ſhew, by contraſt, the injury which thoſe Gothic inſtitutions are to property and commerce. A few examples may be found, ſuch as that of London, whoſe natural and commercial advantage, owing to its ſituation on the Thames, is capable of bearing up againſt the political evils of a corporation; but in almoſt all other caſes the fatality is too viſible to be doubted or denied.

* *It is difficult to account for the origin of charter and corporation towns, unleſs we ſuppoſe them to have ariſen out of, or been connected with, ſome ſpecies of garriſon ſervices. The times in which they began juſtify this idea. The generality of thoſe towns have been garriſons and the corporations were charged with the care of the gates of the towns, when no military garriſon was preſent. Their refuſing or granting admiſſion to ſtrangers, which has produced the cuſtom of giving, ſelling and buying freedom, has more of the nature of garriſon authority than civil government. Soldiers are free of all corporations throughout the nation, by the ſame propriety that every ſoldier is free of every garriſon, and no other perſons are. He can follow any employment, with the permiſſion of his officers, in any corporation town throughout the nation.*

Though the whole nation is not ſo directly affected by the depreſſion of property in corporation towns as the inhabitants themſelves, it partakes of the conſequence. By leſſening the value of property, the quantity of national commerce is curtailed. Every man is a cuſtomer in proportion to his ability; and as all parts of a nation trade with each other, whatever affects any of the parts, muſt neceſſarily communicate to the whole.

As one of the houſes of the Engliſh parliament is, in a great meaſure, made up of elections from theſe corporations; and as it is unnatural that a pure ſtream would flow from a foul fountain, its vices are but a continuation of the vices of its origin. A man of moral honour and good political principles, cannot ſubmit to the mean drudgery and diſgraceful arts, by which ſuch elections are carried. To be a ſucceſsful candidate, he muſt be deſtitute of the qualities that conſtitute a juſt legiſlator: And being thus diſciplined to corruption by the mode of entering into parliament, it is not to be expected that the repreſentative ſhould be better than the man.

Mr. Burke, in ſpeaking of the Engliſh repreſentation, has advanced as bold a challenge as ever was given in the days of chivalry. "Our repreſentation," ſays he, "has been found *perfectly adequate* "*to all the purpoſes* for which a repreſentation of the people can be "deſired or deviſed. I defy," continues he, "the enemies of our "conſtitution to ſhew the contrary." This declaration from a man, who has been in conſtant oppoſition to all the meaſures of parliament the whole of his political life, a year or two excepted, is moſt extraordinary; and comparing him with himſelf, admits of no other alternative, than that he acted againſt his judgment as a member, or has declared contrary to it as an author.

But it is not in the repreſentation only that the defects lie, and therefore I proceed in the next place to ariſtocracy.

What is called the houſe of peers, is conſtituted on a ground very ſimilar to that, againſt which there is a law in other caſes. It amounts to a combination of perſons in one common intereſt. No reaſon can be given, why an houſe of legiſlation ſhould be compoſed entirely of men whoſe occupation conſiſts in letting landed property, than why it ſhould be compoſed of thoſe who hire, or of brewers, or bakers, or any other ſeparate claſs of men.

Mr. Burke calls this houſe, "*the great ground and pillar of ſecurity* "*to the landed intereſt.*" Let us examine this idea.

What pillar of ſecurity does the landed intereſt require more than any other intereſt in the ſtate, or what right has it to a diſtinct and

ſeparate repreſentation from the general intereſt of a nation? The only uſe to be made of this power, (and which it has always made), is to ward off taxes from itſelf, and throw the burden upon ſuch articles of conſumption by which itſelf would be leaſt affected.

That this has been the conſequence (and will always be the conſequence of conſtructing governments on combinations), is evident with reſpect to England, from the hiſtory of its taxes.

Notwithſtanding taxes have increaſed and multiplied upon every article of common conſumption, the land-tax, which more particularly affects this "pillar," has diminiſhed. In 1788, the amount of the land-tax was £.1,950,000, which is half a million leſs than it produced almoſt an hundred years ago,* notwithſtanding the rentals are in many inſtances doubled ſince that period.

Before the coming of the Hanoverians, the taxes were divided in nearly equal proportions between the land and articles of conſumption, the land bearing rather the largeſt ſhare; but ſince that era, nearly thirteen millions annually of new taxes have been thrown upon conſumption. The conſequence of which has been a conſtant increaſe in the number and wretchedneſs of the poor, and in the amount of the poor-rates. Yet here again the burden does not fall in equal proportions on the ariſtocracy with the reſt of the community. Their reſidences, whether in town or country, are not mixed with the habitations of the poor. They live apart from diſtreſs, and the expence of relieving it. It is in manufacturing towns and labouring villages that thoſe burdens preſs the heavieſt; in many of which it is one claſs of poor ſupporting another.

Several of the moſt heavy and productive taxes are ſo contrived, as to give an exemption to this pillar, thus ſtanding in its own defence. The tax upon beer brewed for ſale does not affect the ariſtocracy, who brew their own beer free of this duty. It falls only on thoſe who have not conveniency or ability to brew, and who muſt purchaſe it in ſmall quantities. But what will mankind think of the juſtice of taxation, when they know, that this tax alone, from which the ariſtocracy are from circumſtances exempt, is nearly equal to the whole of the land-tax, being in the year 1788, and it is not leſs now, £.1,666,152, and with its proportion of the taxes on malt and hops, it exceeds it.—That a ſingle article, thus partially conſumed, and that chiefly by the working part, ſhould be ſubject to a tax, equal to

* *See Sir John Sinclair's Hiſtory of the Revenue. The land-tax in 1646 was £.2,473,499.*

that on the whole rental of a nation, is, perhaps, a fact not to be paralleled in the hiſtories of revenues.

This is one of the conſequences reſulting from an houſe of legiſlation, compoſed on the ground of a combination of common intereſt; for whatever their ſeparate politics as to parties may be, in this they are united. Whether a combination acts to raiſe the price of any article for ſale, or the rate of wages; or whether it acts to throw taxes from itſelf upon another claſs of the community, the principle and the effect are the ſame: And if the one be illegal, it will be difficult to ſhew that the other ought to exiſt.

It is no uſe to ſay, that taxes are firſt propoſed in the houſe of commons; for as the other houſe has always a negative, it can always defend itſelf; and it would be ridiculous to ſuppoſe that its acquieſcence in the meaſures to be propoſed were not underſtood before hand. Beſides which, it has obtained ſo much influence by borough-traffic, and ſo many of its relations and connections are diſtributed on both ſides of the commons, as to give it, beſides an abſolute negative in the houſe, a preponderancy in the other, in all matters of common concern.

It is difficult to diſcover what is meant by the *landed intereſt*, if it does not mean a combination of ariſtocratical land-holders, oppoſing their own pecuniary intereſt to that of the farmer, and every branch of trade, commerce, and manufacture. In all other reſpects it is the only intereſt that needs no partial protection. It enjoys the general protection of the world. Every individual, high or low, is intereſted in the fruits of the earth; men, women, and children, of all ages and degrees, will turn out to aſſiſt the farmer, rather than a harveſt ſhould not be got in; and they will not act thus by any other property. It is the only one for which the common prayer of mankind is put up, and the only one that can never fail from the want of means. It is the intereſt, not of the policy, but of the exiſtence of man, and when it ceaſes, he muſt ceaſe to be.

No other intereſt in a nation ſtands on the ſame united ſupport. Commerce, manufactures, arts, ſciences, and every thing elſe, compared with this, are ſupported but in parts. Their proſperity or their decay has not the ſame univerſal influence. When the vallies laugh and ſing, it is not the farmer only, but all creation that rejoices. It is a proſperity that excludes all envy; and this cannot be ſaid of any thing elſe.

Why then does Mr. Burke talk of his houſe of peers, as the pillar of the landed intereſt? Were that pillar to ſink into the earth,

the ſame landed property would continue, and the ſame ploughing, ſowing, and reaping would go on. The ariſtocracy are not the farmers who work the land, and raiſe the produce, but are the mere conſumers of the rent; and when compared with the active world, are the drones, a ſeraglio of males, who neither collect the honey nor form the hive, but exiſt only for lazy enjoyment.

Mr. Burke, in his firſt eſſay, called ariſtocracy, "*the Corinthian capital of poliſhed ſociety.*" Towards completing the figure, he has now added the *pillar;* but ſtill the baſe is wanting; and whenever a nation chooſes to act a Sampſon, not blind, but bold, down go the temple of Dagon, the lords and the Philiſtines.

If a houſe of legiſlation is to be compoſed of men of one claſs, for the purpoſe of protecting a diſtinct intereſt, all the other intereſts ſhould have the ſame. The inequality, as well as the burden of taxation, ariſes from admitting it in one caſe, and not in all. Had there been an houſe of farmers, there had been no game laws; or a houſe of merchants and manufacturers, the taxes had neither been ſo unequal nor ſo exceſſive. It is from the power of taxation being in the hands of thoſe who can throw ſo great a part of it from their own ſhoulders, that it has raged without a check.

Men of ſmall or moderate eſtates, are more injured by the taxes being thrown on articles of conſumption, than they are eaſed by warding it from landed property, for the following reaſons:

Firſt, they conſume more of the productive taxable articles, in proportion to their property, than thoſe of large eſtates.

Secondly, their reſidence is chiefly in towns, and their property in houſes; and the increaſe of the poor rates, occaſioned by taxes on conſumption, is in much greater proportion than the land-tax has been favoured. In Birmingham, the poor-rates are not leſs than ſeven ſhillings in the pound. From this, as is already obſerved, the ariſtocracy are in a great meaſure exempt.

Theſe are but a part of the miſchiefs flowing from the wretched ſcheme of an houſe of peers.

As a combination, it can always throw a conſiderable portion of taxes from itſelf; and as an hereditary houſe, accountable to nobody, it reſembles a rotten borough, whoſe conſent is to be courted by intereſt. There are but few of its members, who are not in ſome mode or other participators, or diſpoſers of the public money. One turns a candle-holder, or a lord in waiting; another a lord of the bed chamber, a groom of the ſtole, or any inſignificant nominal office, to which a ſalary is annexed, paid out of the public taxes, and which avoids the

direct appearance of corruption. Such ſituations are derogatory to the character of man; and where they can be ſubmitted to, honour cannot reſide.

To all theſe are to be added the numerous dependants, the long liſt of younger branches and diſtant relations, who are to be provided for at the public expence: In ſhort, were an eſtimation to be made of the charge of ariſtocracy to a nation, it will be found nearly equal to that of ſupporting the poor. The duke of Richmond alone (and there are caſes ſimilar to his) takes away as much for himſelf, as would maintain two thouſand poor and aged perſons. Is it, then, any wonder, that under ſuch a ſyſtem of government, taxes and rates have multiplied to their preſent extent?

In ſtating theſe matters, I ſpeak an open and diſintereſted language, dictated by no paſſion but that of humanity. To me, who have not only refuſed offers, becauſe I thought them improper, but have declined rewards I might with reputation have accepted, it is no wonder that meanneſs and impoſition appear diſguſtful. Independence is my happineſs, and I view things as they are, without regard to place or perſon; my country is the world, and my religion is to do good.

Mr. Burke, in ſpeaking of the ariſtocratical law of primogeniture, ſays, "It is the ſtanding law of our landed inheritance; and which, "without queſtion, has a tendency, and I think," continues, he, "a happy tendency, to preſerve a character of weight and conſe-"quence."

Mr. Burke, may call this law what he pleaſes, but humanity and impartial reflection will denounce it a law of brutal injuſtice. Were we not accuſtomed to the daily practice, and did we only hear of it as the law of ſome diſtant part of the world, we ſhould conclude that the legiſlators of ſuch countries had not yet arrived at a ſtate of civilization.

As to preſerving a character of *weight and conſequence*, the caſe appears to me directly the reverſe. It is an attaint upon character; a ſort of privateering on family property. It may have weight among dependant tenants, but it gives none on a ſcale of national, and much leſs of univerſal character. Speaking for myſelf, my parents were not able to give me a ſhilling, beyond what they gave me in education; and to do this they diſtreſſed themſelves; yet, I poſſeſs more of what is called conſequence, in the world, than any one in Mr. Burke's catalogue of ariſtocrats.

Having thus glanced at ſome of the defects of the two houſes of

parliament, I proceed to what is called the crown, upon which I ſhall be very conciſe.

It ſignifies a nominal office of a million ſterling a year, the buſineſs of which conſiſts in receiving the money. Whether the perſon be wiſe or fooliſh, ſane or inſane, a native or a foreigner, matters not. Every miniſtry acts upon the ſame idea that Mr. Burke writes, namely, that the people muſt be hood-winked, and held in ſuperſtitious ignorance by ſome bugbear or other; and what is called the crown anſwers this purpoſe, and therefore it anſwers all the purpoſes to be expected from it. This is more than can be ſaid of the other two branches.

The hazard to which this office is expoſed in all countries, is not from any thing that can happen to the man, but from what may happen to the nation, the danger of its coming to its ſenſes.

It has been cuſtomary to call the crown the executive power, and the cuſtom is continued, though the reaſon has ceaſed.

It was called the *executive*, becauſe the perſon whom it ſignified uſed formerly, to ſit in the character of a judge, in adminiſtering or executing the laws. The tribunals were then a part of the court. The power, therefore, which is now called the judicial, is what was called the executive; and, conſequently, one or other of the terms is redundant, and one of the offices uſeleſs. When we ſpeak of the crown now, it means nothing; it ſignifies neither a judge nor a general: Beſides which, it is the laws that govern, and not the man. The old terms are kept up, to give an appearance of conſequence to empty forms; and the only effect they have is that of increaſing expences.

Before I proceed to the means of rendering governments more conducive to the general happineſs of mankind, than they are at preſent, it will not be improper to take a review of the progreſs of taxation in England.

It is a general idea, that when taxes are once laid on, they are never taken off. However true this may have been of late, it was not always ſo. Either, therefore, the people of former times were more watchful over government than thoſe of the preſent, or government was adminiſtered with leſs extravagance.

It is now ſeven hundred years ſince the Norman conqueſt, and the eſtabliſhment of what is called the crown. Taking this portion of time in ſeven ſeparate periods of one hundred years each, the amount of the annual taxes, at each period, will be as follows:

Annual amount of taxes levied by William the conqueror, beginning in the year 1066, £.400,000

Annual amount of taxes at one hundred years from the conqueſt, (1166)	£.200,000
Annual amount of taxes at two hundred years from the conqueſt, (1266)	150,000
Annual amount of taxes at three hundred years from the conqueſt, (1366)	130,000
Annual amount of taxes at four hundred years from the conqueſt, (1466)	100,000

Theſe ſtatements, and thoſe which follow, are taken from ſir John Sinclair's Hiſtory of the Revenue; by which it appears, that taxes continued decreaſing for four hundred years, at the expiration of which time they were reduced three-fourths, viz. from four hundred thouſand pounds to one hundred thouſand. The people of England of the preſent day, have a traditionary and hiſtorical idea of the bravery of their anceſtors; but whatever their virtues or their vices might have been, they certainly were a people who would not be impoſed upon, and who kept government in awe as to taxation, if not as to principle. Though they were not able to expel the monarchical uſurpation, they reſtricted it to a republican economy of taxes.

Let us now review the remaining three hundred years.

Annual amount of taxes at five hundred years from the conqueſt, (1566)	£.500,000
Annual amount of taxes at ſix hundred years from the conqueſt, (1666)	1,800,000
Annual amount of taxes at the preſent time, (1791)	17,000,000

The difference between the firſt four hundred years and the laſt three, is ſo aſtoniſhing, as to warrant an opinion, that the national character of the Engliſh has changed. It would have been impoſſible to have dragooned the former Engliſh, into the exceſs of taxation that now exiſts; and when it is conſidered that the pay of the army, the navy, and of all the revenue-officers, is the ſame now as it was above a hundred years ago, when the taxes were not above a tenth part of what they are at preſent, it appears impoſſible to account for the enormous increaſe and expenditure, on any other grounds than extravagance, corruption, and intrigue.*

* *Several of the court newſpapers have of late made frequent mention of Wat Tyler. That his memory ſhould be traduced by court ſycophants, and all thoſe who live on the ſpoil of a public, is not to be wondered at. He was, however, the means of checking the rage and injuſtice of taxation in his time, and the nation owed much to his valour. The hiſtory is*

With the revolution of 1688, and more so since the Hanover succession, came the destructive system of continental intrigues, and the rage for foreign wars and foreign dominion; systems of such secure mystery that the expences admit of no accounts; a single line stands

concisely this :—In the time of Richard the second, a poll-tax was levied, of one shilling per head, upon every person in the nation, of whatever estate or condition, on poor as well as rich, above the age of fifteen years. If any favour was shewn in the law, it was to the rich rather than to the poor; as no person could be charged more than twenty shillings for himself, family and servants, though ever so numerous; while all other families, under the number of twenty, were charged per head. Poll-taxes had always been odious; but this being also oppressive and unjust, it excited, as it naturally must, universal detestation among the poor and middle classes. The person known by the name of Wat Tyler, whose proper name was Walter, and a tyler by trade lived at Deptford. The gatherer of the poll-tax, on coming to his house, demanded tax for one of his daughters, whom Tyler declared was under the age of fifteen. The tax-gatherer insisted on satisfying himself, and began an indecent examination of the girl, which enraging the father, he struck him with a hammer, that brought him to the ground, and was the cause of his death.

This circumstance served to bring the discontents to an issue. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood espoused the cause of Tyler, who, in a few days was joined, according to some historians, by upwards of fifty thousand men, and chosen their chief. With this force he marched to London, to demand an abolition of the tax, and a redress of other grievances. The court, finding itself in a forlorn condition, and unable to make resistance, agreed, with Richard at its head, to hold a conference with Tyler in Smithfield, making many fair professions, courtier like, of its disposition to redress the oppressions. While Richard and Tyler were in conversation on these matters, each being on horseback, Walworth, then mayor of London, and one of the creatures of the court, watched an opportunity, and like a cowardly assassin, stabbed Tyler with a dagger; and two or three others falling upon him, he was instantly sacrificed.

Tyler appears to have been an intrepid disinterested man, with respect to himself. All his proposals made to Richard, were on a more just and public ground, than those which had been made to John by the barons; and notwithstanding the sycophancy of historians, and men like Mr. Burke, who seek to gloss over a base action of the court by traducing Tyler, his fame will outlive their falsehood. If the barons merited a monument to be erected in Runnymede, Tyler merits one in Smithfield.

for millions. To what exceſs taxation might have extended, had not the French revolution contributed to break up the ſyſtem, and put an end to pretences, is impoſſible to ſay. Viewed, as that revolution ought to be, as the fortunate means of leſſening the load of taxes of both countries, it is of as much importance to England as to France; and, if properly improved to all the advantages of which it is capable, and to which it leads, deſerves as much celebration in one country as the other.

In purſuing this ſubject, I ſhall begin with the matter that firſt preſents itſelf, that of leſſening the burden of taxes; and ſhall then add ſuch matters and propoſitions, reſpecting the three countries of England, France, and America, as the preſent proſpect of things appears to juſtify; I mean an alliance of the three, for the purpoſes that will be mentioned in their proper place.

What has happened may happen again. By the ſtatement before ſhewn of the progreſs of taxation, it is ſeen, that taxes have been leſſened to a fourth part of what they had formerly been. Though the preſent circumſtances do not admit of the ſame reduction, yet they admit of ſuch a beginning, as may accompliſh that end in leſs time, than in the former caſe.

The amount of taxes for the year, ending at Michaelmas 1778, was as follows:

Land tax,	£.1,950,000
Cuſtoms,	3,789,274
Exciſe (including old and new malt),	6,751,727
Stamps,	1,278,214
Miſcellaneous taxes and incidents,	1,803,755
	£.15,572,970

Since the year 1788, upwards of one million, new taxes have been laid on, beſides the produce from the lotteries; and as the taxes have in general been more productive ſince than before, the amount may be taken, in round numbers, at £.17,000,000

N. B. The expence of collection and the draw-backs, which together amount to nearly two millions, are paid out of the groſs amount; and the above is the nett ſum paid into the exchequer.

This ſum of ſeventeen millions is applied to two different purpoſes; the one to pay the intereſt of the national debt, the other to pay the current expences of each year. About nine millions are appropriated to the former; and the remainder, being nearly eight millions, to the latter. As to the million, ſaid to be applied to the reduction of the

debt, it is ſo much like paying with one hand and taking out with the other, as not to merit much notice.

It happened, fortunately for France, that ſhe poſſeſſed national domains for paying off her debt, and thereby leſſening her taxes; but as this is not the caſe in England, her reduction of taxes can only take place by reducing the current expences, which may now be done to the amount of four or five millions annually, as will hereafter appear. When this is accompliſhed, it will more than counterbalance the enormous charge of the American war; and the ſaving will be from the ſame ſources ~~from~~ whence the evil aroſe.

As to the national debt, however heavy the intereſt may be in taxes, yet, as it ſerves to keep alive a capital, uſeful to commerce, it balances by its effects a conſiderable part of its own weight; and as the quantity of gold and ſilver in England is, by ſome means or other, ſhort of its proper proportion* (being not more than twenty millions, whereas it ſhould be ſixty), it would, beſides the injuſtice, be bad policy to extinguiſh a capital that ſerves to ſupply that defect. But with reſpect to the current expence, whatever is ſaved therefrom is gain. The exceſs may ſerve to keep corruption alive, but it has no re-action on credit and commerce, like the intereſt of the debt.

It is now very probable, that the Engliſh government (I do not mean the nation) is unfriendly to the French revolution. Whatever ſerves to expoſe the intrigue and leſſen the influence of courts, by leſſening taxation, will be unwelcome to thoſe who feed upon the ſpoil. Whilſt the clamour of French intrigue, arbitrary power, popery, and wooden ſhoes could be kept up, the nation was eaſily allured and alarmed into taxes. Thoſe days are now paſt; deception, it is to be hoped, has reaped its laſt harveſt, and better times are in proſpect for both countries, and for the world.

Taking it for granted, that an alliance may be formed between England, France, and America, for the purpoſes hereafter to be mentioned, the national expences of France and England may conſequently be leſſened. The ſame fleets and armies will no longer be neceſſary to either, and the reduction can be made ſhip for ſhip on each ſide. But to accompliſh theſe objects, the governments muſt neceſſarily be fitted to a common correſpondent principle. Confidence can never take place, while an hoſtile diſpoſition remains in either, or where myſ-

* *Foreign intrigues, foreign wars, and foreign dominions, will in a great meaſure account for the deficiency.*

tery and ſecrecy on one ſide, is oppoſed to candour and openneſs on the other.

Theſe matters admitted, the national expences might be put back, *for the ſake of a precedent*, to what they were at ſome period when France and England were not enemies. This, conſequently, muſt be prior to the Hanover ſucceſſion, and alſo to the revolution of 1688.* The firſt inſtance that preſents itſelf, antecedent to thoſe dates, is in the very waſteful and profligate times of Charles the ſecond; at which time England and France acted as allies. If I have choſen a period of great extravagance, it will ſerve to ſhew modern extravagance in a ſtill worſe light; eſpecially as the pay of the navy, the army, and the revenue officers has not increaſed ſince that time.

The peace eſtabliſhment was then as follows:—See ſir John Sinclair's Hiſtory of the Revenue.

Navy,	£.300,000
Army,	212,000
Ordnance,	40,000
Civil Liſt,	462,115
	£.1,014,115

The parliament, however, ſettled the whole annual peace eſtabliſhment at 1,200,000.† If we go back to the time of Elizabeth, the

* *I happened to be in England at the celebration of the centenary of the revolution of* 1688. *The characters of William and Mary have always appeared to me deteſtable; the one ſeeking to deſtroy his uncle, and the other her father, to get poſſeſſion of power themſelves; yet, as the nation was diſpoſed to think ſomething of that event, I felt hurt at ſeeing it aſcribe the whole reputation of it to a man who had undertaken it as a job, and who, beſides what he otherwiſe got, charged ſix hundred thouſand pounds for the expence of the little fleet that brought him from Holland. George the firſt acted the ſame cloſe-fiſted part as William had done, and bought the duchy of Bremin with the money he got from England, two hundred and fifty houſand pounds over and above his pay as king; and having thus purchaſed it at the expence of England, added it to his Hanoverian dominions for his own private profit. In fact, every nation that does not govern itſelf, is governed as a job. England has been the prey of jobs ever ſince the revolution.*

† *Charles, like his predeceſſors and ſucceſſors, finding that war was the harveſt of governments, engaged in a war with the Dutch, the expence of which increaſed the annual expenditure to* £1,800,000 *as*

amount of all the taxes was but half a million, yet the nation ſees nothing during that period, that reproaches it with want of conſequence.

All circumſtances then taken together, ariſing from the French revolution, from the approaching harmony and reciprocal intereſt of the two nations, the abolition of court intrigue on both ſides, and the progreſs of knowledge in the ſcience of government, the annual expenditure might be put back to one million and a half, *viz.*

Navy, - - - - - - -	£.500,000
Army, - - - - - -	500,000
Expences of government, - - -	500,000
	£.1,500,000

Even this ſum is ſix times greater than the expences of government are in America, yet the civil internal government of England (I mean that adminiſtered by means of quarter-ſeſſions, juries, and aſſize, and which, in fact, is nearly the whole, and performed by the nation,) is leſs expence upon the revenue, than the ſame ſpecies and portion of government is in America.

It is time that nations ſhould be rational, and not be governed like animals, for the pleaſure of their riders. To read the hiſtory of kings, a man would be almoſt inclined to ſuppoſe that government conſiſted in ſtag hunting, and that every nation paid a million a year to the huntſman. Man ought to have pride, or ſhame enough to bluſh at being thus impoſed upon, and when he feels his proper character, he will. Upon all ſubjects of this nature, there is often paſſing in the mind, a train of ideas he has not yet accuſtomed himſelf to encourage and communicate. Reſtrained by ſomething that puts on the character of prudence, he acts the hypocrite upon himſelf as well as to others. It is, however, curious to obſerve how ſoon this ſpell can be diſſolved. A ſingle expreſſion, boldly conceived and uttered, will ſometimes put a whole company into their proper feelings, and whole nations are acted upon in the ſame manner.

As to the offices of which any civil government may be compoſed, it matters but little by what names they are deſcribed. In the rotine of buſineſs, as before obſerved, whether a man be ſtyled a preſident, a king, an emperor, a ſenator, or any thing elſe, it is impoſſible that any ſervice he can perform, can merit from a nation more than ten

ſtated under the date of 1866; *but the peace eſtabliſhment was but* £.200,000.

thouſand pounds a year; and as no man ſhould be paid beyond his ſervices, ſo every man of a proper heart will not accept more. Public money ought to be touched with the moſt ſcrupulous conſciouſneſs of honour. It is not the produce of riches only, but of the hard earnings of labour and poverty. It is drawn even from the bitterneſs of want and miſery. Not a beggar paſſes, or periſhes in the ſtreets, whoſe mite is not in that maſs.

Were it poſſible that the congreſs of America, could be ſo loſt to their duty, and to the intereſt of their conſtituents, as to offer general Waſhington, as preſident of America, a million a year, he would not, and he could not, accept it. His ſenſe of honour is of another kind. It has coſt England almoſt ſeventy millions ſterling, to maintain a family imported from abroad, of very inferior capacity to thouſands in the nation; and ſcarcely a year has paſſed that has not produced ſome new mercenary application. Even the phyſicians' bills have been ſent to the public to be paid. No wonder that jails are crowded, and taxes and poor-rates increaſed. Under ſuch ſyſtems, nothing is to be looked for but what has already happened; and as to reformation, whenever it comes, it muſt be from the nation, and not from the government.

To ſhew that the ſum of five hundred thouſand pounds is more than ſufficient to defray all the expences of government, excluſive of navies and armies, the following eſtimate is added for any country, of the ſame extent as England.

In the firſt place, three hundred repreſentatives, fairly elected, are ſufficient for all the purpoſes to which legiſlation can apply, and preferable to a larger number. They may be divided into two, or three houſes, or meet in one, as in France, or in any manner a conſtitution ſhall direct.

As repreſentation is always conſidered, in free countries, as the moſt honourable of all ſtations, the allowance made to it is merely to defray the expence which the repreſentatives incur by that ſervice, and not to it as an office.

If an allowance, at the rate of five hundred pounds *per ann.* be made to every repreſentative, deducting for non-attendance, the expence, if the whole number attended for ſix months each year, would be £. 75,000

The official departments cannot reaſonably exceed the following number, with the ſalaries annexed:

Carried over, £. 75,000

Brought over, - - - - - -	£. 75,000
Three offices, at ten thouſand pounds each -	30,000
Ten ditto, at five thouſand pounds each -	50,000
Twenty ditto, at two thouſand pounds each -	40,000
Forty ditto, at one thouſand pounds each -	40,000
Two hundred ditto, at five hundred pounds each	100,000
Three hundred ditto, at two hundred pounds each	60,000
Five hundred ditto, at one hundred pounds each	50,000
Seven hundred ditto, at ſeventy-five pounds each	52,500
	£. 497,500

If a nation chuſes, it can deduct four *per cent.* from all offices, and make one of twenty thouſand *per ann.*

All revenue officers are paid out of the monies they collect, and therefore, are not in this eſtimation.

The foregoing is not offered as an exact detail of offices, but to ſhew the number and rate of ſalaries which five hundred thouſand pounds will ſupport; and it will, on experience, be found impracticable to find buſineſs ſufficient to juſtify even this expence. As to the manner in which office buſineſs is now performed, the chiefs, in ſeveral offices, ſuch as the poſt-office, and certain offices in the exchequer, &c. do little more than ſign their names three or four times a year; and the whole duty is performed by under clerks.

Taking, therefore, one million and an half as a ſufficient peace eſtabliſhment for all the honeſt purpoſes of government, which is three hundred thouſand pounds more than the peace eſtabliſhment in the profligate and prodigal times of Charles the ſecond (notwithſtanding, as has been already obſerved, the pay and ſalaries of the army, navy, and revenue officers, continue the ſame as at that period), there will remain a ſurplus of upwards of ſix millions out of the preſent current expences. The queſtion then will be, how to diſpoſe of this ſurplus.

Whoever has obſerved the manner in which trade and taxes twiſt themſelves together, muſt be ſenſible of the impoſſibility of ſeparating them ſuddenly.

Firſt, Becauſe the articles now on hand are already charged with the duty, and the reduction cannot take place on the preſent ſtock.

Secondly, Becauſe, on all thoſe articles on which the duty is charged in the groſs, ſuch as *per* barrel, hogſhead, hundred weight, or tun, the abolition of the duty does not admit of being divided down ſo as fully to relieve the conſumer, who purchaſes by the pint,

or the pound. The laſt duty laid on ſtrong beer and ale, was three ſhillings *per* barrel, which, if taken off, would leſſen the purchaſe only half a farthing *per* pint, and conſequently, would not reach to practical relief.

This being the condition of a greater part of the taxes, it will be neceſſary to look for ſuch others as are free from this embarraſſment, and where the relief will be direct and viſible, and capable of immediate operation.

In the firſt place, then, the poor-rates are a direct tax which every houſe-keeper feels, and who knows alſo, to a farthing, the ſum which he pays. The national amount of the whole of the poor-rates is not poſitively known, but can be procured. Sir John Sinclair, in his Hiſtory of the Revenue, has ſtated it at £.2,100,587. A conſiderable part of which is expended in litigations, in which the poor, inſtead of being relieved, are tormented. The expence, however, is the ſame to the pariſh from whatever cauſe it ariſes.

In Birmingham, the amount of the poor-rates is fourteen thouſand pounds a year. This, though a large ſum, is moderate, compared with the population. Birmingham is ſaid to contain ſeventy thouſand ſouls, and on a proportion of ſeventy thouſand to fourteen thouſand pounds poor-rates, the national amount of poor-rates, taking the population of England at ſeven millions, would be but one million four hundred thouſand pounds. It is, therefore, moſt probable, that the population of Birmingham is over rated. Fourteen thouſand pounds is the proportion upon fifty thouſand ſouls, taking two millions of poor-rates as the national amount.

Be it, however, what it may, it is no other than the conſequence of the exceſſive burden of taxes, for, at the time when the taxes were very low, the poor were able to maintain themſelves; and there were no poor-rates.* In the preſent ſtate of things, a labouring man, with a wife and two or three children, does not pay leſs than between ſeven and eight pounds a year in taxes. He is not ſenſible of this, becauſe it is diſguiſed to him in the articles which he buys, and he thinks only of their dearneſs; but as the taxes take from him, at leaſt, a fourth part of his yearly earnings, he is conſequently diſabled from providing for a family, eſpecially if himſelf, or any of them, are afflicted with ſickneſs.

The firſt ſtep, therefore, of practical relief, would be to aboliſh the

* *Poor-rates began about the time of Henry the eighth, when the taxes began to increaſe, and they have increaſed as the taxes increaſed ever ſince.*

poor-rates entirely, and in lieu thereof, to make a remiſſion of taxes to the poor of double the amount of the preſent poor-rates, viz. four millions annually out of the ſurplus taxes. By this meaſure, the poor would be benefited two millions, and the houſe-keepers two millions. This alone would be equal to a reduction of one hundred and twenty millions of the national debt, and conſequently equal to the whole expence of the American war.

It will then remain to be conſidered which is the moſt effectual mode of diſtributing this remiſſion of four millions.

It is eaſily ſeen, that the poor are generally compoſed of large families of children, and old people paſt their labour. If theſe two claſſes are provided for, the remedy will ſo far reach to the full extent of the caſe, that what remains will be incidental, and, in a great meaſure, fall within the compaſs of benefit clubs, which, though of humble invention, merit to be ranked amongſt the beſt of modern inſtitutions.

Admitting England to contain ſeven millions of ſouls; if one fifth thereof are of that claſs of poor which need ſupport, the number will be one million four hundred thouſand. Of this number, one hundred and forty thouſand will be aged poor, as will be hereafter ſhewn, and for which a diſtinct proviſion will be propoſed.

There will then remain one million two hundred and ſixty thouſand, which, at five ſouls to each family, amount to two hundred and fifty-two thouſand families, rendered poor from the expence of children and the weight of taxes.

The number of children under fourteen years of age, in each of thoſe families, will be found to be about five to every two families; ſome having two, and others three; ſome one, and others four; ſome none, and others five; but it rarely happens that more than five are under fourteen years of age, and after this age they are capable of ſervice, or of being apprenticed.

Allowing five children (under fourteen years) to every two families.

The number of children will be - -	630,000
The number of parents were they all living, would be	504,000

It is certain that if the children are provided for, the parents are relieved of conſequence, becauſe it is from the expence of bringing up children that their poverty ariſes.

Having thus aſcertained the greateſt number that can be ſuppoſed to need ſupport on account of young families, I proceed to the mode of relief or diſtribution, which is,

To pay as a remiſſion of taxes to every poor family, out of the ſurplus taxes, and in room of poor-rates, four pounds a year for every child under fourteen years of age; enjoining the parents of ſuch children to ſend them to ſchool, to learn reading, writing, and common arithmetic; the miniſters of every pariſh, of every denomination, to certify jointly to an office, for that purpoſe, that this duty is performed.

The amount of this expence will be, for ſix hundred and thirty thouſand children, at four pounds *per ann.* each, - - - - £.2,520,000

By adopting this method, not only the poverty of the parents will be relieved, but ignorance will be baniſhed from the riſing generation, and the number of poor will hereafter become leſs, becauſe their abilities, by the aid of education, will be greater. Many a youth, with good natural genius, who is apprenticed to a mechanical trade, ſuch as a carpenter, joiner, millwright, ſhipwright, blackſmith, &c. is prevented getting forward the whole of his life, from the want of a little common education when a boy.

I now proceed to the caſe of the aged.

I divide age into two claſſes. Firſt, the approach of age beginning at fifty. Secondly, old age commencing at ſixty.

At fifty, though the mental faculties of man are in full vigour, and his judgment better than at any preceding date, the bodily powers for laborious life are on the decline. He cannot bear the ſame quantity of fatigue as at an earlier period. He begins to earn leſs, and is leſs capable of enduring wind and weather; and in thoſe more retired employments where much ſight is required, he fails apace, and feels himſelf, like an old horſe, beginning to be turned adrift.

At ſixty, his labour ought to be over, at leaſt from direct neceſſity. It is painful to ſee old age working itſelf to death, in what are called civilized countries, for daily bread.

To form ſome judgment of the number of thoſe above fifty years of age, I have ſeveral times counted the perſons I met in the ſtreets of London, men, women, and children, and have generally found that the average is about one in ſixteen or ſeventeen. If it be ſaid that aged perſons do not come much in the ſtreets, ſo neither do infants; and a great proportion of grown children are in ſchools, and in workſhops as apprentices. Taking then ſixteen for a diviſor, the whole number of perſons, in England, of fifty years and upwards of both ſexes, rich and poor, will be four hundred and twenty thouſand.

The perſons to be provided for out of this groſs number will be,

husbandmen, common labourers, journeymen of every trade and their wives, sailors, and disbanded soldiers, worn out servants of both sexes, and poor widows.

There will be also a considerable number of middling tradesmen, who, having lived decently in the former part of life, begin, as age approaches, to lose their business, and at last fall into decay.

Besides these, there will be constantly thrown off from the revolutions of that wheel, which no man can stop, nor regulate, a number from every class of life connected with commerce and adventure.

To provide for all those accidents, and whatever else may befal, I take the number of persons, who at one time or other of their lives, after fifty years of age, may feel it necessary or comfortable to be better supported, than they can support themselves, and that not as a matter of grace and favour, but of right, at one third of the whole number, which is one hundred and forty thousand, as stated in page 220, and for whom a distinct provision was proposed to be made. If there be more, society, notwithstanding the shew and pomposity of government, is in a deplorable condition in England.

Of this one hundred and forty thousand, I take one half, seventy thousand, to be of the age of fifty and under sixty, and the other half to be sixty years and upwards.—Having thus ascertained the probable proportion of the number of aged persons, I proceed to the mode of rendering their condition comfortable, which is,

To pay to every such person of the age of fifty years, and until he shall arrive at the age of sixty, the sum of six pounds *per ann.* out of the surplus taxes; and ten pounds *per ann.* during life, after the age of sixty. The expence of which will be,

Seventy thousand persons at £.6 *per ann.* - -	£.420,000
Seventy thousand persons at £.10 *per ann.* -	700,000
	£.1,120,000

This support, as already remarked, is not of the nature of a charity, but of a right. Every person in England, male and female, pays on an average in taxes, two pounds eight shillings and six pence *per ann.* from the day of his (or her) birth; and if the expence of collection be added, he pays two pounds eleven shillings and six-pence; consequently, at the end of fifty years he has paid one hundred and twenty-eight pounds fifteen shillings; and at sixty, one hundred and fifty-four pounds ten shillings. Converting, therefore, his (or her) individual tax into a tontine, the money he shall receive after fifty years, is but little more than the legal interest of the net money he

has paid; the reſt is made up from thoſe whoſe circumſtances do not require them to draw ſuch ſupport, and the capital in both caſes defrays the expences of government. It is on this ground that I have extended the probable claims to one third of the number of aged perſons in the nation.—Is it then better that the lives of one hundred and forty thouſand aged perſons be rendered comfortable, or that a million a year of public money be expended on any one individual and him often of the moſt worthleſs or inſignificant character? Let reaſon and juſtice, let honour and humanity, let even hypocriſy, ſycophancy and Mr. Burke, let George, let Louis, Leopold, Frederic, Catherine, Cornwallis, or Tippoo Saib, anſwer the queſtion.*

The ſum thus remitted to the poor will be,

To two hundred and fifty-two thouſand poor families, containing ſix hundred and thirty thouſand children,	£.2,520,000
To one hundred and forty thouſand aged perſons, -	1,120,000
	£.3,640,000

There will then remain three hundred and ſixty thouſand pounds out of the four millions, part of which may be applied as follows:

After all the above caſes are provided for, there will ſtill be a number of families who, though not properly of the claſs of poor, yet find

* *Reckoning the taxes by families, five to a family, each family pays on an average,* 12*l.* 17*s.* *and* 6*d.* per ann. *to this ſum are to be added the poor-rates. Though all pay taxes in the articles they conſume, all do not pay poor-rates. About two millions are exempted, ſome as not being houſe-keepers, others as not being able, and the poor themſelves who receive the relief. The average, therefore, of poor-rates on the remaining number, is forty ſhillings for every family of five perſons, which makes the whole average amount of taxes and rates,* 14*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* *For ſix perſons,* 17*l.* 17*s.* *For ſeven perſons,* 20*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.*

The average of taxes in America, under the new or repreſentative ſyſtem of government, including the intereſt of the debt contracted in the war, and taking the population at four millions of ſouls, which it now amounts to, and it is daily increaſing, is five ſhillings per head, men, women, and children. The difference, therefore, between the two governments, is as under,

	England.			*America,*		
For a family of five perſons	14*l.*	17*s.*	6*d.*	1*l.*	5*s.*	0*d.*
For a family of ſix perſons	17	17	0	1	10	0
For a family of ſeven perſons	20	16	6	1	15	0

it difficult to give education to their children; and such children, under such a case, would be in a worse condition than if their parents were actually poor. A nation under a well regulated government, should permit none to remain uninstructed. It is monarchical and aristocratical government only that requires ignorance for its support.

Suppose then four hundred thousand children to be in this condition, which is a greater number than ought to be supposed, after the provisions already made, the method will be,

To allow for each of those children ten shillings a year for the expence of schooling, for six years each, which will give them six months schooling each year, and half a crown a year for paper and spelling books.

The expence of this will be annually* £.250,000.

There will then remain one hundred and ten thousand pounds.

Notwithstanding the great modes of relief which the best instituted and best principled government may devise, there will still be a number of smaller cases, which it is good policy as well as beneficence in a nation to consider.

Were twenty shillings to be given to every woman immediately on the birth of a child, who should make the demand, and none will make it whose circumstances do not require it, it might relieve a great deal of instant distress.

There are about two hundred thousand births yearly in England; and if claimed, by one fourth,

The amount would be - - - - £.50,000

And twenty shillings to every new married couple who should claim in like manner. This would not exceed the sum of £.20,000

* *Public schools do not answer the general purpose of the poor. They are chiefly in corporation towns, from which the country towns and villages are excluded; or if admitted, the distance occasions a great loss of time. Education, to be useful to the poor, should be on the spot; and the best method, I believe to accomplish this, is to enable the parents to pay the expence themselves. There are always persons of both sexes to be found in every village, especially when growing into years, capable of such an undertaking. Twenty children, at ten shillings each (and that not more than six months each year), would be as much as some livings amount to in the remote parts of England; and there are often distressed clergymen's widows to whom such an income would be acceptable. Whatever is given on this account to children answers two purposes, to them it is education, to those who educate them it is a livelihood.*

Alſo twenty thouſand pounds to be appropriated to defray the funeral expences of perſons, who, travelling for work, may die at a diſtance from their friends. By relieving pariſhes from this charge, the ſick ſtranger will be better treated.

I ſhall finiſh this part of my ſubject with a plan adapted to the particular condition of a metropolis, ſuch as London.

Caſes are continually occurring in a metropolis different to thoſe which occur in the country, and for which a different, or rather an additional mode, of relief is neceſſary. In the country, even in large towns, people have a knowledge of each other, and diſtreſs never riſes to that extreme height it ſometimes does in a metropolis. There is no ſuch thing in a country as perſons, in the literal ſenſe of the word, ſtarved to death, or dying with cold from the want of a lodging. Yet ſuch caſes, and others equally as miſerable, happen in London.

Many a youth comes up to London full of expectations, and with little or no money, and unleſs he gets immediate employment he is already half undone; and boys bred up in London without any means of a livelihood, and as it often happens of diſſolute parents, are in a ſtill worſe condition, and ſervants long out of place are not much better off. In ſhort, a world of little caſes are continually ariſing, which buſy or affluent life knows not of, to open the firſt door to diſtreſs. Hunger is not among the poſtponable wants, and a day, even a few hours, in ſuch a condition, is often the criſis of a life of ruin.

Theſe circumſtances, which are the general cauſe of the little theſts and pilferings that lead to greater, may be prevented. There yet remain twenty thouſand pounds out of the four millions of ſurplus taxes, which, with another fund hereafter to be mentioned, amounting to about twenty thouſand pounds more, cannot be better applied than to this purpoſe. The plan then will be,

Firſt, To erect two or more buildings, or take ſome already erected, capable of containing at leaſt ſix thouſand perſons, and to have in each of theſe places as many kinds of employment as can be contrived, ſo that every perſon who ſhall come may find ſomething which he or ſhe can do.

Secondly, To receive all who ſhall come, without enquiring who or what they are. The only condition to be, that for ſo much, or ſo many hours work, each perſon ſhall receive ſo many meals of wholeſome food, and a warm lodging, at leaſt as good as a barrack. That a certain portion of what each perſon's work ſhall be worth ſhall be reſerved, and given to him, or her, on their going away; and that

each perſon ſhall ſtay as long, or as ſhort time, or come as often as he chooſe, on theſe conditions.

If each perſon ſtaid three months, it would aſſiſt by rotation twenty-four thouſand perſons annually, though the real number, at all times, would be but ſix thouſand. By eſtabliſhing an afylum of this kind, ſuch perſons to whom temporary diſtreſſes occur, would have an opportunity to recruit themſelves, and be enabled to look out for better employment.

Allowing that their labour paid but one half the expence of ſupporting them, after reſerving a portion of their earnings for themſelves, the ſum of forty thouſand pounds additional would defray all other charges for even a greater number than ſix thouſand.

The fund very properly convertible to this purpoſe, in addition to the twenty thouſand pounds, remaining of the former fund, will be the produce of the tax upon coals, and ſo iniquitouſly and wantonly applied to the ſupport of the duke of Richmond. It is horrid that any man, more eſpecially at the price coals now are, ſhould live on the diſtreſſes of a community; and any government permitting ſuch an abuſe, deſerves to be diſmiſſed. This fund is ſaid to be about twenty thouſand pounds *per annum*.

I ſhall now conclude this plan with enumerating the ſeveral particulars, and then proceed to other matters.

The enumeration is as follows:

Firſt, Abolition of two millions poor-rates.

Secondly, Proviſion for two hundred and fifty-two thouſand poor families,

Thirdly, Education for one million and thirty thouſand children.

Fourthly, Comfortable proviſion for one hundred and forty thouſand aged perſons.

Fifthly, Donation of twenty ſhillings each for fifty thouſand births.

Sixthly, Donation of twenty ſhillings each for twenty thouſand marriages.

Seventhly, Allowance of twenty thouſand pounds for the funeral expences of perſons travelling for work, and dying at a diſtance from their friends.

Eighthly, Employment, at all times, for the caſual poor in the cities of London and Weſtminſter.

By the operation of this plan, the poor laws, thoſe inſtruments of civil torture, will be ſuperſeded, and the waſteful expence of litigation prevented. The hearts of the humane will not be ſhocked by ragged and hungry children, and perſons of ſeventy and eighty years

of age begging for bread. The dying poor will not be dragged from place to place to breathe their laſt, as a repriſal of pariſh upon pariſh. Widows will have a maintenance for their children, and not be carted away, on the death of their huſbands, like culprits and criminals; and children will no longer be conſidered as increaſing the diſtreſſes of their parents. The haunts of the wretched will be known, becauſe it will be to their advantage, and the number of petty crimes, the offſpring of diſtreſs and poverty, will be leſſened. The poor, as well as the rich, will then be intereſted in the ſupport of government, and the cauſe and apprehenſion of riots and tumults will ceaſe. Ye who ſit in eaſe, and ſolace yourſelves in plenty, and ſuch there are in Turkey and Ruſſia, as well as in England, and who ſay to yourſelves, "Are we not well off," have ye thought of theſe things? When ye do, ye will ceaſe to ſpeak and feel for yourſelves alone.

The plan is eaſy in practice. It does not embarraſs trade by a ſudden interruption in the order of taxes, but effects the relief by changing the application of them; and the money neceſſary for the purpoſe can be drawn from the exciſe collections, which are made eight times a year in every market town in England.

Having now arranged and concluded this ſubject, I proceed to the next.

Taking the preſent current expences at ſeven millions and an half, which is the leaſt amount they are now at, there will remain (after the ſum of one million and an half be taken for the new current expences, and four millions for the before mentioned ſervice) the ſum of two millions, part of which to be applied as follows:

Though fleets and armies, by an alliance with France, will, in a great meaſure, become uſeleſs, yet the perſons who have devoted themſelves to thoſe ſervices, and have thereby unfitted themſelves for other lines of life, are not to be ſufferers by the means that make others happy. They are a different deſcription of men to thoſe who form or hang about a court.

A part of the army will remain at leaſt for ſome years, and alſo of the navy, for which a proviſion is already made in the former part of this plan of one million, which is almoſt half a million more than the peace eſtabliſhment of the army and navy in the prodigal times of Charles the ſecond.

Suppoſe then fifteen thouſand ſoldiers to be diſbanded, and to allow to each of thoſe men three ſhillings a week during life, clear of all deductions, to be paid in the ſame manner as the Chelſea college penſioners are paid, and for them to return to their trades and their

friends; and alſo to add fifteen thouſand ſix-pences per week to the pay of the ſoldiers who ſhall remain; the annual expence will be,

To the pay of fifteen thouſand diſbanded ſoldiers, at three ſhillings per week, - - - -	£.117,000
Additional pay to the remaining ſoldiers, -	19,500
Suppoſe that the pay to the officers of the diſbanded corps be of the ſame amount as the ſum allowed to the men -	117,000
	£.253,500
To prevent bulky eſtimations, admit the ſame ſum to the diſbanded navy as to the army, and the ſame increaſe of pay - - - - - - -	253,500
Total,	£.507,000

Every year ſome part of this ſum of half a million (I omit the odd ſeven thouſand pounds, for the purpoſe of keeping the account unembarraſſed) will fall in, and the whole of it in time, as it is on the ground of life annuities, except the increaſed pay of twenty-nine thouſand pounds. As it falls in, a part of the taxes may be taken off; for inſtance, when thirty thouſand pounds fall in, the duty on hops may be wholly taken off; and as other parts fall in, the duties on candles and ſoap may be leſſened, till at laſt they will totally ceaſe.

There now remains at leaſt one million and an half of ſurplus taxes.

The tax on houſes and windows is one of thoſe direct taxes, which, like the poor-rates, is not confounded with trade; and when taken off, the relief will be inſtantly felt. This tax falls heavy on the middle claſs of people,

The amount of this tax by the returns of 1788,

was,	*l.*	*s.*	*d.*
Houſes and windows by the act of 1766,	385,459	11	7
Ditto ditto by the act of 1779,	130,739	14	5½
Total, £.516,199	6	0½	

If this tax be ſtruck off, there will then remain about one million of ſurplus taxes, and as it is always proper to keep a ſum in reſerve, for incidental matters, it may be beſt not to extend reductions further, in the firſt inſtance, but to conſider what may be accompliſhed by other modes of reform.

Among the taxes moſt heavily felt is the commutation tax. I ſhall, therefore, offer a plan for its abolition, by ſubſtituting another in its place, which will effect three objects at once:

Firſt, That of removing the burden to where it can beſt be borne.

Secondly, Reſtoring juſtice among families by a diſtribution of property.

Thirdly, extirpating the overgrown influence ariſing from the unnatural law of primogeniture, and which is one of the principal ſources of corruption at elections.

The amount of the commutation tax by the returns of

1788, was, - - - - £.771,657

When taxes are propoſed, the country is amuſed by the plauſible language of taxing luxuries. One thing is called a luxury at one time, and ſomething elſe at another; but the real luxury does not conſiſt in the article, but in the means of procuring it, and this is always kept out of ſight.

I know not why any plant or herb of the field ſhould be a greater luxury in one country than another, but an overgrown eſtate in either is a luxury at all times, and as ſuch is the proper object of taxation. It is, therefore, right to take thoſe kind tax-making gentleman up on their own word, and argue on the principle themſelves have laid down, that of *taxing luxuries*. If they, or their champion, Mr. Burke, who, I fear, is growing out of date like the man in armour, can prove that an eſtate of twenty, thirty, or forty thouſand pounds a year is not a luxury, I will give up the argument.

Admitting that any annual ſum, ſay, for inſtance, one thouſand pounds, is neceſſary or ſufficient for the ſupport of a family, conſequently the ſecond thouſand is of the nature of a luxury, the third ſtill more ſo, and by proceeding on, we ſhall at laſt arrive at a ſum that may not improperly be called a prohibitable luxury. It would be impolitic to ſet bounds to property acquired by induſtry, and therefore it is right to place the prohibition beyond the probable acquiſition to which induſtry can extend; but there ought to be a limit to property, or the accumulation of it, by bequeſt. It ſhould paſs in ſome other line. The richeſt in every nation have poor relations, and thoſe often very near in conſanguinity.

The following table of progreſſive taxation is conſtructed on the above principles, and as a ſubſtitute for the commutation tax. It will reach the point of prohibition by a regular operation, and thereby ſuperſede the ariſtocratical law of primogeniture.

TABLE I.

A tax on all eſtates of the clear yearly value of fifty pounds, after deducting the land tax, and up

£.	s.	d.	
To 500	0	3	per pound
From 500 to 1000	0	6	per pound
On the 2d thouſand	0	9	per pound
On the 3d ditto	1	0	per pound
On the 4th ditto	1	6	per pound
On the 5th ditto	2	0	per pound
On the 6th ditto	3	0	per pound
On the 7th ditto	4	0	per pound
On the 8th ditto	5	0	per pound
On the 9th ditto	6	0	per pound
On the 10th ditto	7	0	per pound
On the 11th ditto	8	0	per pound
On the 12th ditto	9	0	per pound
On the 13th ditto	10	0	per pound
On the 14th ditto	11	0	per pound
On the 15th ditto	12	0	per pound
On the 16th ditto	13	0	per pound
On the 17th ditto	14	0	per pound
On the 18th ditto	15	0	per pound
On the 19th ditto	16	0	per pound
On the 20th ditto	17	0	per pound
On the 21ſt ditto	18	0	per pound
On the 22d ditto	19	0	per pound
On the 23d ditto	20	0	per pound

The foregoing table ſhews the progreſſion per pound on every progreſſive thouſand. The following table ſhews the amount of the tax on every thouſand ſeparately, and in the laſt column, the total amount of all the ſeparate ſums collected.

TABLE II.

£.	d.	l.	s.	d.
An eſtate of 50 *per ann.* at 3 per £. pays		0	12	6
100	3	1	5	0
200	3	2	10	0
300	3	3	15	0
400	3	5	0	0
500	3	7	5	0

After 500l.—the tax of ſix-pence per pound takes place on the ſecond 500l.—conſequently, an eſtate of 1000l. *per ann.* pays 21l. 15s. and ſo on.

	l.		s.	d.		l.	s.	Total amount l.	s.
For the 1ſt	500	at	0	3	per pound	7	5	21	15
2d	500	at	0	6		14	10		
2d	1000	at	0	9		37	10	59	5
3d	1000	at	1	0		50	0	109	5
4th	1000	at	1	6		75	0	184	5
5th	1000	at	2	0		100	0	284	5
6th	1000	at	3	0		150	0	434	5
7th	1000	at	4	0		200	0	634	5
8th	1000	at	5	0		250	0	880	5
9th	1000	at	6	0		300	0	1180	5
10th	1000	at	7	0		350	0	1540	5
11th	1000	at	8	0		400	0	1930	5
12th	1000	at	9	0		450	0	2360	5
13th	1000	at	10	0		500	0	2880	5
14th	1000	at	11	0		550	0	3430	5
15th	1000	at	12	0		600	0	4030	5
16th	1000	at	13	0		650	0	4680	5
17th	1000	at	14	0		700	0	5380	5
18th	1000	at	15	0		750	0	6130	5
19th	1000	at	16	0		800	0	6930	5
20th	1000	at	17	0		850	0	7780	5
21ſt	1000	at	18	0		900	0	8680	5
22d	1000	at	19	0		950	8	9630	5
23d	1000	at	20	0		1000	0	10630	5

At the twenty-third thouſand the tax becomes twenty ſhillings in the pound, and conſequently every thouſand beyond that ſum can produce no profit but by dividing the eſtate. Yet formidable as this tax appears, it will not, I believe, produce ſo much as the commutation tax; ſhould it produce more, it ought to be lowered to that amount upon eſtates under two or three thouſand a year.

On ſmall and middling eſtates it is lighter (as it is intended to be) than the commutation tax. It is not till after ſeven or eight thouſand a year, that it begins to be heavy. The object is not ſo much the produce of the tax as the juſtice of the meaſure. The ariſtocracy has ſcreened itſelf too much, and this ſerves to reſtore a part of the loſt equilibrium.

As an inſtance of its ſcreening itſelf, it is only neceſſary to look back to the firſt eſtabliſhment of the exciſe laws, at what is called the revolution, or the coming of Charles the ſecond. The ariſtocratical intereſt then in power, commuted the feudal ſervices itſelf was under, by laying a tax on beer brewed for *ſale;* that is, they compounded with Charles for an exemption from thoſe ſervices for themſelves and their heirs, by a tax to be paid by other people. The ariſtocracy do not purchaſe beer brewed for ſale, but brew their own beer free of the duty, and if any commutation at that time were neceſſary, it ought to have been at the expence of thoſe for whom the exemptions from thoſe ſervices were intended ;* inſtead of which it was thrown on an entire different claſs of men.

But the chief object of this progreſſive tax (beſides the juſtice of rendering taxes more equal than they are) is, as already ſtated, to extirpate the overgrown influence ariſing from the unnatural law of primogeniture, and which is one of the principal ſources of corruption at elections.

It would be attended with no good conſequences to enquire how ſuch vaſt eſtates as thirty, forty, or fifty thouſand a year could commence, and that at a time when commerce and manufactures were not in a ſtate to admit of ſuch acquiſitions. Let it be ſufficient to remedy the evil by putting them in a condition of deſcending again to the community, by the quiet means of apportioning them among all the heirs and heireſſes of thoſe families. This will be the more neceſſary becauſe hitherto the ariſtocracy have quartered their younger children and connections upon the public, in uſeleſs poſts, places, and offices, which when aboliſhed will leave them deſtitute, unleſs the law of primogeniture be alſo aboliſhed or ſuperſeded.

A progreſſive tax will, in a great meaſure, effect this object, and that as a matter of intereſt to the parties moſt immediately concerned, as will be ſeen by the following table; which ſhews the nett produce upon every eſtate, after ſubtracting the tax. By this it will appear, that after an eſtate exceeds thirteen or fourteen thouſand a year, the remainder produces but little profit to the holder, and conſequently, will either paſs to the younger children, or to other kindred.

* *The tax on beer brewed for ſale, from which the ariſtocracy are exempt, is almoſt one million more than the preſent commutation tax, being by the returns of* 1788, £.1,666,152 ; *and conſequently they ought to take on themſelves the amount of the commutation tax, as they are already exempted from one which is almoſt a million greater.*

TABLE III.

Shewing the nett produce of every eſtate, from one thouſand to twenty-three thouſand pounds a year.

No. of thouſands per ann.	Total tax ſubtracted.	Nett produce.
£.1000	£. 21	£. 979
2000	59	1941
3000	109	2891
4000	184	3816
5000	284	4716
6000	434	5566
7000	634	6365
8000	880	7120
9000	1180	7820
10,000	1530	8470
11,000	1930	9070
12,000	2380	9620
13,000	2880	10,120
14,000	3430	10,570
15,000	4030	10,970
16,000	4680	11,320
17,000	5380	11,620
18,000	6130	11,870
19,000	6930	12,170
20,000	7780	12,220
21,000	8680	12,320
22,000	9630	12,370
23,000	10,630	12,370

N. B. The odd ſhillings are dropped in this table.

According to this table, an eſtate cannot produce more than £.12,370, clear of the land tax and the progreſſive tax, and therefore the dividing ſuch eſtates will follow as a matter of family intereſt. An eſtate of £.23,000 a year, divided into five eſtates of four thouſand each and one of three, will be charged only £.1129, which is but five *per cent.* but if held by one poſſeſſor will be charged £.10,630.

Although an enquiry into the origin of thoſe eſtates be unneceſſary, the continuation of them in their preſent ſtate is another ſubject. It is a matter of national concern. As hereditary eſtates, the law has created the evil, and it ought alſo to provide the remedy. Primogeniture ought to be aboliſhed, not only becauſe it is unnatural and un-

juſt, but becauſe the country ſuffers by its operation. By cutting off (as before obſerved) the younger children from their proper portion of inheritance, the public is loaded with the expence of maintaining them; and the freedom of elections violated by the overbearing influence which this unjuſt monopoly of family property produces. Nor is this all. It occaſions a waſte of national property. A conſiderable part of the land of the country is rendered unproductive, by the great extent of parks and chaſes which this law ſerves to keep up, and this at a time when the annual production of grain is not equal to the national conſumption.*—In ſhort, the evils of the ariſtocratical ſyſtem are ſo great and numerous, ſo inconſiſtent with every thing that is juſt, wiſe, natural and beneficent, that when they are conſidered, there ought not to be a doubt that many, who are now claſſed under that deſcription, will wiſh to ſee ſuch a ſyſtem aboliſhed.

What pleaſure can they derive from contemplating the expoſed condition, and almoſt certain beggary of their younger offſpring? Every ariſtocratical family has an appendage of family beggars hanging round it, which in a few ages, or a few generations, are ſhook off, and conſole themſelves with telling their tale in alms-houſes, work-houſes, and priſons. This is the natural conſequence of ariſtocracy. The peer and the beggar are often of the ſame family. One extreme produces the other: To make one rich many muſt be made poor; neither can the ſyſtem be ſupported by other means.

There are two claſſes of people to whom the laws of England are particularly hoſtile, and thoſe the moſt helpleſs; younger children and the poor. Of the former I have juſt ſpoken; of the latter I ſhall mention one inſtance out of the many that might be produced, and with which I ſhall cloſe this ſubject.

Several laws are in exiſtence for regulating and limiting workmen's wages. Why not leave them as free to make their own bargains, as the law-makers are to let their farms and houſes? Perſonal labour is all the property they have. Why is that little, and the little freedom they enjoy to be infringed? But the injuſtice will appear ſtronger, if we conſider the operation and effect of ſuch laws. When wages are fixed by what is called a law, the legal wages remain ſtationary, while every thing elſe is in progreſſion; and as thoſe who make that law, ſtill continue to lay on new taxes by other laws, they increaſe the expence of living by one law, and take away the means by another.

* *See the Reports on the Corn Trade.*

But if theſe gentlemen law-makers and tax-makers thought it right to limit the poor pittance which perſonal labour can produce, and on which a whole family is to be ſupported, they certainly muſt feel themſelves happily indulged in a limitation on their own part, of not leſs than twelve thouſand a year, and that of property they never acquired (nor probably any of their anceſtors), and of which they have made ſo ill a uſe.

Having now finiſhed this ſubject, I ſhall bring the ſeveral particulars into one view, and then proceed to other matters.

The firſt EIGHT ARTICLES are brought forward from page 226.

1. Abolition of two millions poor-rates.

2. Proviſion for two hundred and fifty-two thouſand poor families, at the rate of four pounds per head for each child under fourteen years of age; which, with the addition of two hundred and fifty thouſand pounds, provides alſo education for one million and thirty thouſand children.

3. Annuity of ſix pounds (per ann.) each for all poor perſons, decayed tradeſmen, or others (ſuppoſed ſeventy thouſand) of the age of fifty years, and until ſixty.

4. Annuity of ten pounds each for life for all poor perſons, decayed tradeſmen, and others (ſuppoſed ſeventy thouſand) of the age of ſixty years.

5. Donation of twenty ſhillings each for fifty thouſand births.

6. Donation of twenty ſhillings each for twenty thouſand marriages.

7. Allowance of twenty thouſand pounds for the funeral expences of perſons travelling for work, and dying at a diſtance from their friends.

8. Employment at all times for the caſual poor in the cities of London and Weſtminſter.

SECOND ENUMERATION.

9. Abolition of the tax on houſes and windows.

10. Allowance of three ſhillings per week for life to fifteen thouſand diſbanded ſoldiers, and a proportionate allowance to the officers of the diſbanded corps.

11. Increaſe of pay to the remaining ſoldiers of £.19,500 annually.

12. The ſame allowance to the diſbanded navy, and the ſame increaſe of pay, as to the army.

13. Abolition of the commutation tax,

14. Plan of a progreſſive tax, operating to extirpate the unjuſt and unnatural law of primogeniture, and the vicious influence of the ariſtocratical ſyſtem.*

There yet remains, as already ſtated, one million of ſurplus taxes. Some part of this will be required for circumſtances that do not immediately preſent themſelves, and ſuch part as ſhall not be wanted, will admit a further reduction of taxes equal to that amount.

Among the claims that juſtice requires to be made, the condition of the inferior revenue officers will merit attention. It is a reproach to any government to waſte ſuch an immenſity of revenue in ſinecures and nominal and unneceſſary places and offices, and not allow even a decent livelihood to thoſe on whom the labour falls. The ſalary of the inferior officers of the revenue has ſtood at the petty pittance of leſs than fifty pounds a year, for upwards of one hundred years. It ought to be ſeventy. About one hundred and twenty thouſand pounds applied to this purpoſe, will put all thoſe ſalaries in a decent condition.

* *When enquiries are made into the condition of the poor, various degrees of diſtreſs will moſt probably be found, to render a different arrangement preferable to that which is already propoſed. Widows with families will be in greater want than where there are huſbands living. There is alſo a difference in the expence of living in different countries; and more ſo in fuel.*

Suppoſe then fifty thouſand extraordinary caſes, at the rate of ten pounds per family per ann.	-	£. 500,000
100,000 *families, at £.8 per family per ann.*	-	800,000
100,000 *families, at £.7 per family per ann.*	-	700,000
140,000 *families, at £.5 per family per ann.*	-	520,000
And inſtead of ten ſhillings per head for the education of other children, to allow fifty ſhillings per family for that purpoſe to fifty thouſand families,	- -	250,000
		£.2,770,000
140,000 *aged perſons as before,*	- -	1,120,000
		£.3,890,000

This arrangement amounts to the ſame ſum as ſtated in page 222, including the £.250,000 for education; but it provides (including the aged people) for four hundred and four thouſand families, which is almoſt one third of all the families in England.

This was propoſed to be done almoſt twenty years ago, but the treaſury board then in being, ſtartled at it, as it might lead to ſimilar expectations from the army and navy; and the event was, that the king, or ſomebody for him, applied to parliament to have his own ſalary raiſed an hundred thouſand a year, which being done, every thing elſe was laid aſide.

With reſpect to another claſs of men, the inferior clergy, I forbear to enlarge on their condition; but all partialities and prejudices for, or againſt, different modes and forms of religion aſide, common juſtice will determine, whether there ought to be an income of twenty or thirty pounds a year to one man, and of ten thouſand to another. I ſpeak on this ſubject with the more freedom, becauſe I am known not to be a Preſbyterian; and therefore the cant cry of court ſycophants, about church and meeting, kept up to amuſe and bewilder the nation, cannot be raiſed againſt me.

Ye ſimple men on both ſides the queſtion, do you not ſee through this courtly craft? If ye can be kept diſputing and wrangling about church and meeting, ye juſt anſwer the purpoſe of every courtier, who lives the while on the ſpoil of the taxes, and laughs at your credulity. Every religion is good that teaches man to be good; and I know of none that inſtructs him to be bad.

All the before-mentioned calculations, ſuppoſe only ſixteen millions and an half of taxes paid into the exchequer, after the expence of collection and drawbacks at the cuſtom-houſe and exciſe-office are deducted; whereas the ſum paid into the exchequer is very nearly, if not quite, ſeventeen millions. The taxes raiſed in Scotland and Ireland are expended in thoſe countries, and therefore their ſavings will come out of their own taxes; but if any part be paid into the Engliſh exchequer, it might be remitted. This will not make one hundred thouſand pounds a year difference.

There now remains only the national debt to be conſidered. In the year 1789, the intereſt, excluſive of the tontine, was £.9,150,138. How much the capital has been reduced ſince that time the miniſter beſt knows. But after paying the intereſt, aboliſhing the tax on houſes and windows, the commutation tax and the poor-rates; and making all the proviſions for the poor, for the education of children, the ſupport of the aged, the diſbanded part of the army and navy, and increaſing the pay of the remainder, there will be a ſurplus of one million.

The preſent ſcheme of paying off the national debt appears to me, ſpeaking as an indifferent perſon, to be an ill concerted, if not a falla-

cious job. The burden of the national debt conſiſts not in its being ſo many millions, or ſo many hundred millions, but in the quantity of taxes collected every year to pay the intereſt. If this quantity continue the ſame, the burden of the national debt is the ſame to all intents and purpoſes, be the capital more or leſs. The only knowledge which the public can have of the reduction of the debt, muſt be through the reduction of taxes for paying the intereſt. The debt, therefore, is not reduced one farthing to the public by all the millions that have been paid; and it would require more money now to purchaſe up the capital, than when the ſcheme began.

Digreſſing for a moment at this point, to which I ſhall return again, I look back to the appointment of Mr. Pitt, as miniſter.

I was then in America. The war was over; and though reſentment had ceaſed, memory was ſtill alive.

When the news of the coalition arrived, though it was a matter of no concern to me as a citizen of America, I felt it as a man. It had ſomething in it which ſhocked, by publicly ſporting with decency, if not with principle. It was impudence in lord North; it was a want of firmneſs in Mr. Fox.

Mr. Pitt was, at that time, what may be called a maiden character in politics. So far from being hackneyed, he appeared not to be initiated into the firſt myſteries of court intrigue. Every thing was in his favour. Reſentment againſt the coalition ſerved as friendſhip to him, and his ignorance of vice was credited for virtue. With the return of peace, commerce and proſperity would riſe of itſelf; yet even this increaſe was thrown to his account.

When he came to the helm the ſtorm was over, and he had nothing to interrupt his courſe. It required even ingenuity to be wrong, and he ſucceeded. A little time ſhewed him the ſame ſort of man as his predeceſſors had been. Inſtead of profiting by thoſe errors which had accumulated a burden of taxes unparalleled in the world, he ſought, I might almoſt ſay, he advertiſed for enemies, and provoked means to increaſe taxation. Aiming at ſomething, he knew not what, he ranſacked Europe and India for adventures, and abandoning the fair pretenſions he began with, became the knight-errant of modern times.

It is unpleaſant to ſee character throw itſelf away. It is more ſo to ſee one's ſelf deceived. Mr. Pitt had merited nothing, but he promiſed much. He gave ſymptoms of a mind ſuperior to the meanneſs and corruption of courts. His apparent candour encouraged expectations; and the public confidence, ſtunned, wearied, and confounded

by a chaos of parties, revived and attached itſelf to him. But miſtaking, as he has done, the diſguſt of the nation againſt the coalition, for merit in himſelf, he has ruſhed into meaſures, which a man leſs ſupported would not have preſumed to act.

All this ſeems to ſhew that change of miniſters amounts to nothing. One goes out, another comes in, and ſtill the ſame meaſures, vices, and extravagance are purſued. It ſignifies not who is miniſter. The defect lies in the ſyſtem. The foundation and the ſuperſtructure of the government is bad. Prop it as you pleaſe, it continually ſinks into court government, and ever will.

I return, as I promiſed, to the ſubject of the national debt, that offspring of the Dutch-Anglo revolution, and its handmaid the Hanover ſucceſſion.

But it is now too late to enquire how it began. Thoſe to whom it is due have advanced the money; and whether it was well or ill ſpent, or pocketed, is not their crime. It is, however, eaſy to ſee, that as the nation proceeds in contemplating the nature and principles of government and to underſtand taxes, and make compariſons between thoſe of America, France and England, it will be next to impoſſible to keep it in the ſame torpid ſtate it has hitherto been. Some reform muſt, from the neceſſity of the caſe, ſoon begin. It is not whether theſe principles preſs with little or much force in the preſent moment. They are out. They are abroad in the world, and no force can ſtop them. Like a ſecret told, they are beyond recal; and he muſt be blind indeed that does not ſee that a change is already beginning

Nine millions of dead taxes is a ſerious thing; and this not only for bad, but in a great meaſure for foreign government. By putting the power of making war into the hands of the foreigners who came for what they could get, little elſe was to be expected than what has happened.

Reaſons are already advanced in this work, ſhewing that whatever the reforms in the taxes may be, they ought to be made in the current expences of government, and not in the part applied to the intereſt of the national debt. By remitting the taxes of the poor, *they* will be totally relieved and all diſcontent will be taken away; and by ſtriking off ſuch of the taxes as are already mentioned, the nation will more than recover the whole expence of the mad American war.

There will then remain only the national debt as a ſubject of diſcontent, and in order to remove, or rather to prevent this, it would be good policy in the ſtock-holders themſelves to conſider it as pro-

perty, ſubject like all other property, to bear ſome portion of the taxes. It would give to it both popularity and ſecurity, and as a great part of its preſent inconvenience is balanced by the capital which it keeps alive, a meaſure of this kind would ſo far add to that balance as to ſilence objections.

This may be done by ſuch gradual means as to accompliſh all that is neceſſary with the greateſt eaſe and convenience.

Inſtead of taxing the capital, the beſt method would be to tax the intereſt by ſome progreſſive ratio, and to leſſen the public taxes in the ſame proportion as the intereſt diminiſhed.

Suppoſe the intereſt was taxed one halfpenny in the pound the firſt year, a penny more the ſecond, and to proceed by a certain ratio to be determined upon, always leſs than any other tax upon property. Such a tax would be ſubtracted from the intereſt at the time of payment, without any expence of collection.

One halfpenny in the pound would leſſen the intereſt and conſequently the taxes, twenty thouſand pounds. The tax on waggons amounts to this ſum, and this tax might be taken off the firſt year. The ſecond year the tax on female ſervants, or ſome other of the like amount might alſo be taken off, and by proceeding in this manner, always applying the tax raiſed from the property of the debt towards its extinction, and not carrying it to the current ſervices, it would liberate itſelf.

The ſtockholders, notwithſtanding this tax, would pay leſs taxes than they do now. What they would ſave by the extinction of the poor-rates, and the tax on houſes and windows, and the commutation tax, would be conſiderably greater than what this tax, ſlow, but certain in its operation, amounts to.

It appears to me to be prudence to look out for meaſures that may apply under any circumſtance that may approach. There is, at this moment, a criſis in the affairs of Europe that requires it. Preparation now is wiſdom. If taxation be once let looſe, it will be difficult to re-inſtate it; neither would the relief be ſo effectual, as to proceed by ſome certain and gradual reduction.

The fraud, hypocriſy, and impoſition of governments, are now beginning to be too well underſtood to promiſe them any longer career. The farce of monarchy and ariſtocracy, in all countries, is following that of chivalry, and Mr. Burke is dreſſing for the funeral. Let it then paſs quietly to the tomb of all other follies, and the mourners be comforted.

The time is not very diſtant when England will laugh at itſelf for

ſending to Holland, Hanover, Zell, or Brunſwick for men, at the expence of a million a year, who underſtood neither her laws, her language, nor her intereſt, and whoſe capacities would ſcarcely have fitted them for the office of a pariſh conſtable. If government could be truſted to ſuch hands, it muſt be ſome eaſy and ſimple thing indeed, and materials fit for all the purpoſes may be found in every town and village in England.

When it ſhall be ſaid in any country in the world, my poor are happy: Neither ignorance nor diſtreſs is to be found among them; my jails are empty of priſoners, my ſtreets of beggars; the aged are not in want, the taxes are not oppreſſive; the rational world is my friend, becauſe I am the friend of its happineſs: When theſe things can be ſaid, then may that country boaſt its conſtitution and its government.

Within the ſpace of a few years we have ſeen two revolutions, thoſe of America and France. In the former, the conteſt was long, and the conflict ſevere; in the latter, the nation acted with ſuch a conſolidated impulſe, that having no foreign enemy to contend with, the revolution was complete in power the moment it appeared. From both thoſe inſtances it is evident, that the greateſt forces that can be brought into the field of revolutions, are reaſon and common intereſt. Where theſe can have the opportunity of acting, oppoſition dies with fear, or crumbles away by conviction. It is a great ſtanding which they have now univerſally obtained; and we may hereafter hope to ſee revolutions, or changes in governments, produced with the ſame quiet operation by which any meaſure, determinable by reaſon and diſcuſſion, is accompliſhed.

When a nation changes its opinion and habits of thinking, it is no longer to be governed as before; but it would not only be wrong, but bad policy, to attempt by force what ought to be accompliſhed by reaſon. Rebellion conſiſts in forcibly oppoſing the general will of a nation, whether by a party or by a government. There ought, therefore, to be in every nation a method of occaſionally aſcertaining the ſtate of public opinion with reſpect to government. On this point the old government of France was ſuperior to the preſent government of England, becauſe, on extraordinary occaſions, recourſe could be had to what was then called the ſtates-general. But in England there are no ſuch occaſional bodies; and as to thoſe who are now called repreſentatives, a great part of them are mere machines of the court, placemen, and dependants.

I preſume, that though all the people of England pay taxes, not an hundredth part of them are electors, and the members of one of

them are electors, and the members of one of the houſes of parliament repreſent nobody but themſelves. There is, therefore, no power but the voluntary will of the people that has a right to act in any matter reſpecting a general reform; and by the ſame right that two perſons can confer on ſuch a ſubject, a thouſand may. The object, in all ſuch preliminary proceedings, is to find out what the general ſenſe of a nation is, and to be governed by it. If it prefer a bad or defective government to a reform, or chooſe to pay ten times more taxes than there is occaſion for, it has a right ſo to do; and ſo long as the majority do not impoſe conditions on the minority, different from what they impoſe on themſelves, though there may be much error, there is no injuſtice. Neither will the error continue long. Reaſon and diſcuſſion will ſoon bring things right, however wrong they may begin. By ſuch a proceſs no tumult is to be apprehended. The poor, in all countries, are naturally both peaceable and grateful in all reforms in which their intereſt and happineſs is included. It is only by neglecting and rejecting them that they become tumultuous.

The objects that now preſs on the public attention are, the French revolution, and the proſpect of a general revolution in governments. Of all nations in Europe, there is none ſo much intereſted in the French revolution as England. Enemies for ages, and that at a vaſt expence, and without any national object, the opportunity now preſents itſelf of amicably cloſing the ſcene, and joining their efforts to reform the reſt of Europe. By doing this, they will not only prevent the further effuſion of blood, and increaſe of taxes, but be in a condition of getting rid of a conſiderable part of their preſent burdens, as has been already ſtated. Long experience however has ſhewn, that reforms of this kind are not thoſe which old governments wiſh to promote, and therefore it is to nations and not to ſuch governments, that theſe matters preſent themſelves.

In the preceding part of this work, I have ſpoken of an alliance between England, France, and America, for purpoſes that were to be afterwards mentioned. Though I have no direct authority on the part of America, I have good reaſon to conclude, that ſhe is diſpoſed to enter into a conſideration of ſuch a meaſure, provided that the governments with which ſhe might ally, acted as national governments, and not as courts enveloped in intrigue and myſtery. That France as a nation, and a national government, would prefer an alliance with England, is a matter of certainty. Nations, like individuals, who have long been enemies, without knowing each other, or knowing

why, become the better friends when they diſcover the errors and impoſitions under which they had acted.

Admitting, therefore, the probability of ſuch a connection, I will ſtate ſome matters by which ſuch an alliance, together with that of Holland, might render ſervice, not only to the parties immediately concerned, but to all Europe.

It is, I think, certain, that if the fleets of England, France, and Holland were confederated, they could propoſe, with effect, a limitation to and a general diſmantling of all the navies in Europe, to a certain proportion to be agreed upon.

Firſt, that no new ſhip of war ſhall be built by any power in Europe, themſelves included.

Secondly, that all the navies now in exiſtence ſhall be put back, ſuppoſed to one tenth of their preſent force. This will ſave to France and England at leaſt two millions ſterling annually to each, and their relative force be in the ſame proportion as it is now. If men will permit themſelves to think, as rational beings ought to think, nothing can appear more ridiculous and abſurd, excluſive of all moral reflections, than to be at the expence of building navies, filling them with men, and then hauling them into the ocean, to try which can ſink each other faſteſt. Peace, which coſts nothing, is attended with infinitely more advantage, than any victory with all its expence. But this, though it beſt anſwers the purpoſe of nations, does not that of court governments, whoſe habited policy is pretence for taxation, places, and offices.

It is, I think, alſo certain, that the above confederated powers, together with that of the United States of America, can propoſe with effect, to Spain, the independence of South America, and the opening thoſe countries of immenſe extent and wealth to the general commerce of the world, as North America now is.

With how much more glory, and advantage to itſelf, does a nation act, when it exerts its powers to reſcue the world from bondage, and to create to itſelf friends, that when it employs thoſe powers to increaſe ruin, deſolation, and miſery. The horrid ſcene that is now acting by the Engliſh government in the Eaſt-Indies, is fit only to be told of Goths and Vandals, who, deſtitute of principle, robbed and tortured the world they were incapable of enjoying.

The opening of South Ameriea would produce an immenſe field of commerce, and a ready money market for manufactures, which the eaſtern world does not. The Eaſt is already a country full of manufactures, the importation of which is not only an injury to the manu-

factures of England, but a drain upon its ſpecie. The balance againſt England by this trade is regularly upwards of half a million annually ſent out in the Eaſt-India ſhips in ſilver; and this is the reaſon, together with German intrigue, and German ſubſidies, there is ſo little ſilver in England.

But any war is harveſt to ſuch governments, however ruinous it may be to a nation. It ſerves to keep up deceitful expectations which prevent a people looking into the defects and abuſes of government. It is the *lo here!* and the *lo there!* that amuſes and cheats the multitude.

Never did ſo great an opportunity offer itſelf to England, and to all Europe, as is produced by the two revolutions of America and France. By the former, freedom has a national champion in the weſtern world; and by the latter, in Europe. When another nation ſhall join France, deſpotiſm and bad government will ſcarcely dare to appear. To uſe a trite expreſſion, the iron is becoming hot all over Europe. The inſulted German and the enſlaved Spaniard, the Ruſs and the Pole, are beginning to think. The preſent age will hereafter merit to be called the Age of Reaſon, and the preſent generation will appear to the future as the Adam of a new world.

When all the governments of Europe ſhall be eſtabliſhed on the repreſentative ſyſtem, nations will become acquainted, and the animoſities and prejudices fomented by the intrigue and artifice of courts, will ceaſe. The oppreſſed ſoldier will become a freeman; and the tortured ſailor, no longer dragged along the ſtreets like a felon, will purſue his mercantile voyage in ſafety. It would be better that nations ſhould continue the pay of their ſoldiers during their lives, and give them their diſcharge and reſtore them to freedom and their friends, and ceaſe recruiting, than retain ſuch multitudes at the ſame expence, in a condition uſeleſs to ſociety and themſelves. As ſoldiers have hitherto been treated in moſt countries, they might be ſaid to be without a friend. Shunned by the citizen on an apprehenſion of being enemies to liberty, and too often inſulted by thoſe who commanded them, their condition was a double oppreſſion. But where genuine principles of liberty pervade a people, every thing is reſtored to order; and the ſoldier civilly treated, returns the civility.

In contemplating revolutions, it is eaſy to perceive that they may ariſe from two diſtinct cauſes; the one, to avoid or get rid of ſome great calamity, the other, to obtain ſome great and poſitive good; and the two may be diſtinguiſhed by the names of active and paſſive revolutions. In thoſe which proceed from the former cauſe, the tem-

per becomes incenſed and foured; and the redreſs, obtained by danger, is too often ſullied by revenge. But in thoſe which proceed from the latter, the heart, rather animated than agitated, enters ſerenely upon the ſubject. Reaſon and diſcuſſion, perſuaſion and conviction, become the weapons in the conteſt, and it is only when thoſe are attempted to be ſuppreſſed that recourſe is had to violence. When men unite in agreeing that a *thing is good*, could it be obtained, ſuch as relief from a burden of taxes and the extinction of corruption, the object is more than half accompliſhed. What they approve as the end, they will promote in the means.

Will any man ſay in the preſent exceſs of taxation, falling ſo heavily on the poor, that a remiſſion of five pounds annually of taxes to one hundred and four thouſand poor families is not a *good thing?* Will he ſay that a remiſſion of ſeven pounds annually to one hundred thouſand other poor families—of eight pounds annually to another hundred thouſand poor families, and of ten pounds annually to fifty thouſand poor and widowed families, are not *good things?* And, to proceed a ſtep farther in this climax, will he ſay, that to provide againſt the misfortunes to which all human life is ſubject, by ſecuring ſix pounds annually for all poor, diſtreſſed, and reduced perſons of the age of fifty and until ſixty, and of ten pounds annually after ſixty, is not a *good thing*?

Will he ſay, that an abolition of two millions of poor-rates to the houſe-keepers, and of the whole of the houſe and window-light tax and of the commutation tax is not a *good thing?* Or will he ſay, that to aboliſh corruption is a *bad thing?*

If, therefore, the good to be obtained be worthy of a paſſive, rational, and coſtleſs revolution, it would be bad policy to prefer waiting for a calamity that ſhould force a violent one. I have no idea, conſidering the reforms which are now paſſing and ſpreading throughout Europe, that England will permit herſelf to be the laſt; and where the occaſion and the opportunity quietly offer, it is better than to wait for a turbulent neceſſity. It may be conſidered as an honour to the animal faculties of man to obtain redreſs by courage and danger, but it is far greater honour to the rational faculties to accompliſh the ſame object by reaſon, accommodation and general conſent.*

* *I know it is the opinion of many of the moſt enlightened characters in France (there always will be thoſe who ſee farther into events than others) not only among the general maſs of citizens, but of many of the principal members of the former national aſſembly, that the monarchical plan will not*

As reforms, or revolutions, call them which you pleaſe, extend themſelves among nations, thoſe nations will form connections and conventions, and when a few are thus confederated, the progreſs will be rapid, till deſpotiſm and corrupt government be totally expelled, at leaſt out of two quarters of the world, Europe and America. The Algerine piracy may then be commanded to ceaſe, for it is only by the malicious policy of old governments, againſt each other, that it exiſts.

Throughout this work, various and numerous as the ſubjects are, which I have taken up and inveſtigated, there is only a ſingle paragraph upon religion, viz. "*that every religion is good that teaches man to be good.*"

I have carefully avoided to enlarge upon the ſubject, becauſe I am inclined to believe, that what is called the preſent miniſtry wiſh to ſee contentions about religion kept up to prevent the nation turning its attention to ſubjects of government. It is, as if they were to ſay, "*Look that way, or any way, but this.*"

But as religion is very improperly made a political machine, and the reality of it is thereby deſtroyed, I will conclude this work with ſtating in what light religion appears to me.

If we ſuppoſe a large family of children, who, on any particular day, or particular circumſtance, made it a cuſtom to preſent to their parent ſome token of their affection and gratitude, each of them would make a different offering, and moſt probably in a different manner. Some would pay their congratulations in themes of verſe and proſe, by ſome little devices, as their genius dictated, or according to what they thought would pleaſe; and, perhaps, the leaſt of all, not

continue many years in that country. They have found out, that as wiſdom cannot be made hereditary, power ought not; and that for a man to merit a million ſterling a year from a nation, he ought to have a mind capable of comprehending from an atom to a univerſe, which, if he had, he would be above receiving the pay. But they wiſhed not to appear to lead the nation faſter than its own reaſon and intereſt dictated. In all the converſations where I have been preſent upon this ſubject, the idea always was, that when ſuch a time, from the general opinion of the nation, ſhall arrive, that the honourable and liberal method would be, to make a handſome preſent in fee ſimple to the perſon, whoever he may be, that ſhall then be in the monarchical office, and for him to retire to the enjoyment of private life, poſſeſſing his ſhare of general rights and privileges, and to be no more accountable to the public for his time and his conduct than any other citizen.

able to do any of thofe things, would ramble into the garden, or the field, and gather what it thought the prettieft flower it could find, though, perhaps, it might be but a fimple weed. The parent would be more gratified, by fuch a variety, than if the whole of them had acted on a concerted plan, and each had made exactly the fame offering. This would have the cold appearance of contrivance, or the harfh one of control. But of all unwelcome things, nothing would more afflict the parent than to know, that the whole of them had afterwards gotten together by the ears, boys and girls, fighting, fcratching, reviling, and abufing each other about which was the beft or the worft prefent.

Why may we not fuppofe, that the great Father of all is pleafed with variety of devotion; and that the greateft offence we can act, is that by which we feek to torment and render each other miferable. For my own part, I am fully fatisfied that what I am now doing, with an endeavour to conciliate mankind, to render their condition happy, to unite nations that have hitherto been enemies, and to extirpate the horrid practice of war, and break the chains of flavery and oppreffion, is acceptable in his fight, and being the beft fervice I can perform, I act it chearfully.

I do not believe that any two men, on what are called doctrinal points, think alike who think at all. It is only thofe who have not thought that appear to agree. It is in this cafe as with what is called the Britifh conftitution. It has been taken for granted to be good, and encomiums have fupplied the place of proof. But when the nation comes to examine into principles and the abufes it admits, it will be found to have more defects than I have pointed out in this work and the former.

As to what are called national religions, we may, with as much propriety, talk of national gods. It is either political craft or the remains of the pagan fyftem, when every nation had its feparate and particular deity. Among all the writers of the Engliih church clergy, who have treated on the general fubject of religion, the prefent bifhop of Landaff has not been excelled, and it is with much pleafure that I take this opportunity of expreffing this token of refpect.

I have now gone through the whole of the fubject, at leaft, as far as it appears to me at prefent. It has been my intention for the five years I have been in Europe to offer an addrefs to the people of England on the fubject of government, if the opportunity prefented itfelf before I returned to America. Mr. Burke has thrown it in my way, and I thank him. On a certain occafion, three years ago,

I preſſed him to propoſe a national convention, to be fairly elected, for the purpoſe of taking the ſtate of the nation into conſideration; but I found, that however ſtrongly the parliamentary current was then ſetting againſt the party he acted with, their policy was to keep every thing within that field of corruption, and truſt to accidents. Long experience had ſhewn that parliaments would follow any change of miniſters, and on this they reſted their hopes and their expectations.

Formerly, when diviſions aroſe reſpecting governments, recourſe was had to the ſword, and a civil war enſued. That ſavage cuſtom is exploded by the new ſyſtem, and reference is had to national conventions. Diſcuſſion and the general will arbitrates the queſtion, and to this, private opinion yields with a good grace, and order is preſerved uninterrupted.

Some gentlemen have affected to call the principles upon which this work and the former part of the *Rights of Man* are founded, "a new fangled doctrine." The queſtion is not whether thoſe principles are new or old, but whether they are right or wrong. Suppoſe the former, I will ſhew their effect by a figure eaſily underſtood.

It is now towards the middle of February. Were I to take a turn into the country, the trees would preſent a leafleſs winterly appearance. As people are apt to plug twigs as they go along, I perhaps might do the ſame, and by chance might obſerve, that a *ſingle bud* on that twig had begun to ſwell. I ſhould reaſon very unnaturally, or rather not reaſon at all, to ſuppoſe *this* was the *only* bud in England which had this appearance. Inſtead of deciding thus, I ſhould inſtantly conclude, that the ſame appearance was beginning, or about to begin, every where; and though the vegetable ſleep will continue longer on ſome trees and plants than on others, and though ſome of them may not *bloſſom* for two or three years, all will be in leaf in the ſummer, except thoſe which are *rotten*. What pace the political ſummer may keep with the natural, no human foreſight can determine. It is, however, not difficult to perceive that the ſpring is begun.—Thus wiſhing, as I ſincerely do, freedom and happineſs to all nations, I cloſe the SECOND PART.

APPENDIX

AS the publication of this work has been delayed beyond the time intended, I think it not improper, all circumſtances conſidered, to ſtate the cauſes that have occaſioned that delay.

The reader will probably obſerve, that ſome parts in the plan contained in this work for reducing the taxes, and certain parts in Mr. Pitt's ſpeech at the opening of the preſent ſeſſion, Tueſday, January 31, are ſo much alike, as to induce a belief, that either the author had taken the hint from Mr. Pitt, or Mr. Pitt from the author.—I will firſt point out the parts that are ſimilar, and then ſtate ſuch circumſtances as I am acquainted with, leaving the reader to make his own concluſion.

Conſidering it as almoſt an unprecedented caſe, that taxes ſhould be propoſed to be taken off, it is equally extraordinary that ſuch a meaſure ſhould occur to two perſons at the ſame time; and ſtill more ſo (conſidering the vaſt variety and multiplicity of taxes) that they ſhould hit on the ſame ſpecific taxes. Mr. Pitt has mentioned, in his ſpeech, the tax on *carts* and *waggons*—that on *female ſervants*—the lowering the tax on *candles*, and the taking off the tax of three ſhillings on *houſes* having under ſeven windows.

Every one of thoſe ſpecific taxes are a part of the plan contained in this work, and propoſed alſo to be taken off. Mr. Pitt's plan, it is true, goes no farther than to a reduction of three hundred and twenty thouſand pounds; and the reduction propoſed in this work, to nearly ſix millions. I have made my calculations on only ſixteen millions and an half of revenue, ſtill aſſerting that it was very nearly, if not quite, ſeventeen millions." Mr. Pitt ſtates it at £.16,690,000. I know enough of the matter to ſay, that he has not *over*ſtated it. Having thus given the particulars, which correſpond in this work and his ſpeech, I will ſtate a chain of circumſtances that may lead to ſome explanation.

The firſt hint for leſſening the taxes, and that as a conſequence flowing from the French revolution, is to be found in the ADDRESS and

DECLARATION of the gentlemen who met at the Thatched-Houſe tavern, Auguſt 20, 1791. Among many other particulars ſtated in that addreſs, is the following, put as an interrogation to the government oppoſers of the French revolution. "*Are they ſorry that the "pretence for new oppreſſive taxes, and the occaſion for continuing many "old taxes will be at an end?*"

It is well known, that the perſons who chiefly frequent the Thatched-Houſe tavern, are men of court connections, and ſo much did they take this addreſs and declaration reſpecting the French revolution and the reduction of taxes in diſguſt, that the landlord was under the neceſſity of informing the gentlemen, who compoſed the meeting of the 20th of Auguſt, and who propoſed holding another meeting, that he could not receive them.*

What was only hinted in the addreſs and declaration reſpecting taxes and principles of government, will be found reduced to a regular ſyſtem in this work. But as Mr. Pitt's ſpeech contains ſome of the ſame things reſpecting taxes, I now come to give the circumſtances before alluded to.

The caſe is: This work was intended to be publiſhed juſt before the meeting of parliament, and for that purpoſe a conſiderable part of the copy was put into the printer's hands in September, and all the remaining copy, as far as page 160, which contains the part to which Mr. Pitt's ſpeech is ſimilar, was given to him full ſix weeks before

* *The gentleman who ſigned the addreſs and declaration as chairman of the meeting, Mr. Horne Tooke, being generally ſuppoſed to be the perſon who drew it up, and having ſpoken much in commendation of it, has been jocularly accuſed of praiſing his own work. To free him from this embarraſſment, and to ſave him the repeated trouble of mentioning the author, as he has not failed to do, I make no heſitation in ſaying that as the opportunity of benefiting by the French revolution eaſily occurred to me, I drew up the publication in queſtion, and ſhewed it to him and ſome other gentlemen; who, fully approving it, held a meeting for the purpoſe of making it public, and ſubſcribed to the amount of fifty guineas to defray the expence of advertiſing. I believe there are at this time in England, a greater number of men acting on diſintereſted principles, and determined to look into the nature and practices of government themſelves, and not blindly truſt, as has hitherto been the caſe, either to government generally, or to parliaments, or to parliamentary oppoſition, than at any former period. Had this been done a century ago, corruption and taxation had not arrived to the height they are now at.*

the meeting of parliament, and he was informed of the time at which it was to appear. He had compoſed nearly the whole about a fortnight before the time of Parliament meeting, and had printed as far as page 112, and had given me a proof of the next ſheet, up to page 128. It was then in ſufficient forwardneſs to be out at the time propoſed, as two other ſheets were ready for ſtriking off. I had before told him, that if he thought he ſhould be ſtraightened for time, I could get part of the work done at another preſs, which he deſired me not to do. In this manner the work ſtood on the Tueſday fortnight preceding the meeting of parliament, when all at once, without any previous intimation, though I had been with him the evening before, he ſent me by one of his workmen, all the remaining copy, from page 112, declining to go on with the work *on any conſideration*.

To account for this extraordinary conduct I was totally at a loſs, as he ſtopped at the part where the arguments on ſyſtems and principles of government cloſed, and where the plan for the reduction of taxes, the education of children, and the ſupport of the poor and the aged begins; and ſtill more eſpecially, as he had, at the time of his beginning to print, and before he had ſeen the whole copy, offered a thouſand pounds for the copy-right, together with the future copy-right of the former part of the Rights of Man. I told the perſon who brought me this offer that I ſhould not accept it, and wiſhed it not to be renewed, giving him as my reaſon, that though I believed the printer to be an honeſt man, I would never put it in the power of any printer or publiſher to ſuppreſs or alter a work of mine, by making him maſter of the copy, or give to him the right of ſelling it to any miniſter, or to any other perſon, or to treat as a mere matter of traffic, that which I intended ſhould operate as a principle.

His refuſal to complete the work (which he could not purchaſe) obliged me to ſeek for another printer, and this of conſequence would throw the publication back till after the meeting of parliament, otherwiſe it would have appeared that Mr. Pitt had only taken taken up a part of the plan which I had more fully ſtated.

Whether that gentleman, or any other, had ſeen the work or any part of it, is more than I have authority to ſay. But the manner in which the work was returned, and the particular time at which this was done, and that after the offers he had made, are ſuſpicious circumſtances. I know what the opinion of bookſellers and publiſhers is upon ſuch a caſe, but as to my own opinion, I chooſe to make no declaration. There are many ways by which proof ſheets may be procured by other perſons before a work publicly appears; to which I ſhall add a certain circumſtance, which is,

A miniſterial bookſeller in Piccadilly who has been employed, as common report ſays, by a clerk of one of the boards cloſely connected with the miniſtry (the board of trade and plantation of which Hawkſbury is preſident) to publiſh what he calls my Life (I wiſh his own life and that thoſe of the cabinet were as good) uſed to have his books printed at the ſame printing office that I employed; but when the former part of the *Rights of Man* came out, he took his work away in dudgeon; and about a week or ten days before the printer returned my copy, he came to make him an offer of his work again, which was accepted. This would conſequently give him admiſſion into the printing-office where the ſheets of this work were then lying; and as bookſellers and printers are free with each other, he would have the opportunity of ſeeing what was going on.—Be the caſe however as it may, Mr. Pitt's plan, little and diminutive as it is, would have made a very aukward appearance, had this work appeared at the time the printer had engaged to finiſh it.

I have now ſtated the particulars which occaſioned the delay, from the propoſal to purchaſe, to the refuſal to print. If all the gentlemen are innocent, it is very unfortunate for them that ſuch a variety of ſuſpicious circumſtances ſhould, without any deſign, arrange themſelves together.

Having now finiſhed this part, I will conclude with ſtating another circumſtance.

About a fortnight or three weeks before the meeting of parliament, a ſmall addition, amounting to about twelve ſhillings and ſix pence a year, was made to the pay of the ſoldiers, or rather, their pay was docked ſo much leſs. Some gentlemen who knew in part, that this work would contain a plan of reforms reſpecting the oppreſſed condition of ſoldiers, wiſhed me to add a note to the work, ſignifying, that the part upon that ſubject had been in the printer's hands ſome weeks before that addition of pay was propoſed. I declined doing this, leſt it ſhould be interpreted into an air of vanity, or an endeavour to excite ſuſpicion (for which perhaps there might be no grounds) that ſome of the government gentlemen, had, by ſome means or other, made out what this work would contain; and had not the printing been interrupted ſo as to occaſion a delay beyond the time fixed for publication, nothing contained in this appendix would have appeared.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THE AUTHORS OF

"THE REPUBLICAN."

GENTLEMEN,

M. DUCHASTELET has mentioned to me the intention of ſome perſons to commence a work under the title of "*The Republican.*"

As I am a citizen of a country which knows no other majeſty than that of the people—no other government than that of the repreſentative body—no other ſovereignty than that of the laws, and which is attached to *France* both by alliance and by gratitude, I voluntarily offer you my ſervices in ſupport of principles as honourable to a nation as they are adapted to promote the happineſs of mankind. I offer them to you with the more zeal, as I know the moral, literary, and political character of thoſe who are engaged in the undertaking, and find myſelf honoured in their good opinion.

But I muſt at the ſame time obſerve, that from my ignorance of the French language, my works muſt neceſſarily undergo a tranſlation; they can of courſe be but of little utility, and my offering muſt conſiſt more of wiſhes than ſervices—I muſt add, that I am obliged to paſs a part of this ſummer in England and Ireland.

As the public has done me the unmerited favour of recognizing me under the appellation of "Common Senſe," which is my uſual ſignature, I ſhall continue it in this publication to avoid miſtakes, and to prevent my being ſuppoſed the author of works not my own. As to my political principles, I ſhall endeavour, in this letter, to trace their

general features in such a manner, as that they cannot be misunderstood.

It is desirable in most instances to avoid that, which may give even the least suspicion with respect to the part meant to be adopted, and particularly on the present occasion, where a perfect clearness of expression is necessary to the avoidance of any possible misinterpretation. I am happy, therefore, to find, that the work in question is entitled "*The Republican.*" This word expresses perfectly the idea which we ought to have of government in general—*res republica*—the public affairs of a nation.

As to the word *monarchy*, though the address and intrigue of courts have rendered it familiar, it does not contain the less of reproach or of inf lt to a nation. The word, in its immediate and original sense, signifies *the absolute power of a single individual*, who may prove a fool, an hypocrite, or a tyrant. The appellation admits of no other interpretation than that which is here given. *France* is therefore not a *monarchy;* it is insulted when called by that name. The servile spirit which characterises this species of government is banished from France, and this country, like AMERICA, can now afford to monarchy no more than a glance of disdain.

Of the errors which monarchical ignorance or knavery has spread through the world, the one which bears the marks of the most dexterous invention, is the opinion that the system of *republicanism* is only adapted to a small country, and that a *monarchy* is suited, on the contrary, to those of greater extent. Such is the language of courts, and such the sentiments which they have caused to be adopted in monarchic countries; but the opinion is contrary at the same time to principle and to experience.

The government, to be of real use, should possess a complete knowledge of all the parties—all the circumstances, and all the interests of a nation. The monarchic system, in consequence, instead of being suited to a country of great extent, would be more admissible in a small territory, where an individual may be supposed to know the affairs and the interests of the whole. But when it is attempted to extend this individual knowledge to the affairs of a great country, the capacity of knowing bears no longer any proportion to the extent or multiplicity of the objects which ought to be known, and the government inevitably falls from ignorance into tyranny. For the proof of this position we need only look to SPAIN, RUSSIA, GERMANY, TURKEY, and the whole of the eastern continent—Countries for the deliverance of which I offer my most sincere wishes.

On the contrary, the true *republican* ſyſtem, by election and repreſentation, offers the only means which are known, and in my opinion the only means which are poſſible of proportioning the wiſdom and the information of a government to the extent of a country.

The ſyſtem of *repreſentation* is the ſtrongeſt and moſt powerful centre that can be deviſed for a nation. Its attraction acts ſo powerfully, that men give it their approbation even without reaſoning on the cauſe; and FRANCE, however diſtant its ſeveral parts, finds itſelf at this moment *an whole*, in its *central* repreſentation. The citizen is aſſured that his rights are protected, and the ſoldier feels that he is no longer the ſlave of a deſpot, but that he is become one of the nation, and intereſted of courſe in its defence.

The ſtates at preſent ſtyled *republican*, as *Holland*, *Genoa*, *Venice*, *Berne*, *&c.* are not only unworthy of the name, but are actually in oppoſition to every principle of *a republican* government, and the countries ſubmitted to their power are, truly ſpeaking, ſubjected to an *ariſtocratic* ſlavery!

It is, perhaps, impoſſible in the firſt ſteps which are made in a revolution to avoid all kind of error, in principle or in practice, or in ſome inſtances to prevent the combination of both. Before the ſenſe of a nation is ſufficiently enlightened, and before men have entered into the habits of a free communication with each other of their natural thoughts, a certain reſerve—a timid prudence ſeizes on the human mind, and prevents it from attaining its level—with that vigour and promptitude that belongs to *right*—An example of this influence diſcovers itſelf in the commencement of the preſent revolution: But happily this diſcovery has been made before the conſtitution was completed, and in time to provide a remedy.

The *hereditary ſucceſſion* can never exiſt as a matter of *right*; it is a *nullity*—a *nothing*. To admit the idea, is to regard man as a ſpecies of property belonging to ſome individuals, either born or to be born! It is to conſider our deſcendants, and all poſterity, as mere animals without a right or a will! It is, in fine, the moſt baſe and humiliating idea that ever degraded the human ſpecies, and which, for the honour of humanity, ſhould be deſtroyed for ever.

The idea of hereditary ſucceſſion is ſo contrary to the rights of man, that if we were ourſelves to be recalled to exiſtence, inſtead of being replaced by our poſterity, we ſhould not have the right of depriving ourſelves beforehand of thoſe *rights* which would then properly belong to us. On what ground, then, or by what authority, do we dare to deprive of their rights thoſe children who will ſoon

be men? Why are we not ſtruck with the injuſtice which we perpetrate on our deſcendants, by endeavouring to tranſmit them as a vile herd, to maſters whoſe vices are all that can be foreſeen.

Whenever the *French* conſtitution ſhall be rendered conformable to its *Declaration of Rights*, we ſhall then be enabled to give to FRANCE, and with juſtice, the appellation of a *civic empire*; for its government will be the empire of laws, founded on the great republican principles of *elective repreſentation*, and the *Rights of Man*—But monarchy and hereditary ſucceſſion are incompatible with the *baſis* of its conſtitution.

I hope that I have at preſent ſufficiently proved to you that I am a good republican; and I have ſuch a confidence in the truth of theſe principles, that I doubt not they will ſoon be as univerſal in *France* as in *America*. The pride of human nature will aſſiſt their evidence, will contribute to their eſtabliſhment, and men will be aſhamed of monarchy.

I am, with reſpect,

Gentlemen,

Your friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

Paris, June, 1791

TO THE

ABBE SYEYAS.

Paris, 8th July, 1791.

SIR,

"AT the moment of my departure for England, I read, in the *Moniteur* of Tuesday last, your letter, in which you give the challenge on the subject of government, and offer to defend what is called the *monarchical opinion* against the republican system.

"I accept of your challenge with pleasure; and I place such a confidence in the superiority of the republican system over that nullity of system, called *monarchy*, that I engage not to exceed the extent of fifty pages, and to leave you the liberty of taking as much latitude as you may think proper.

"The respect which I bear your moral and literary reputation, will be your security for my candour in the course of this discussion; but, notwithstanding that I shall treat the subject seriously and sincerely, let me premise, that I consider myself at liberty to ridicule, as they deserve, monarchical absurdities, whensoever the occasion shall present itself.

"By republicanism, I do not understand what the name signifies in Holland, and in some parts of Italy. I understand simply a government by representation—a government founded upon the principles of the Declaration of Rights; principles to which several parts of the French constitution arise in contradiction. The declarations of the rights of France and America are but one and the same thing in principles, and almost in expressions; and this is the republicanism which I undertake to defend against what is called *monarchy* and *aristocracy*.

" I ſee with pleaſure, that in reſpect to one point, we are already agreed; and *that is the extreme danger of a civil liſt of thirty millions.* I can diſcover no reaſon why one of the parts of the government ſhould be ſupported with ſo extravagant a profuſion, whilſt the other ſcarcely receives what is ſufficient for its common wants.

" This dangerous and diſhonourable diſproportion, at once ſupplies the one with the means of corrupting, and throws the other into the predicament of being corrupted. In America there is but little difference, with regard to this point, between the legiſlative and the executive part of our government; but the firſt is much better attended to than it is in France.*

" In whatſoever manner, Sir, I may treat the ſubject of which you have propoſed the inveſtigation, I hope, that you will not doubt my entertaining for you the higheſt eſteem. I muſt alſo add, that I am not the perſonal enemy of kings. Quite the contrary. No man more heartily wiſhes than myſelf to ſee them all in the happy and honourable ſtate of private individuals; but, I am the avowed, open and intrepid enemy of what is called monarchy; and I am ſuch by principles which nothing can either alter or corrupt—by my attachment to humanity; by the anxiety which I feel within myſelf, for the dignity and the honour of the human race; by the diſguſt which I exeperience, when I obſerved men directed by children, and governed by brutes; by the horror which all the evils that monarchy has ſpread over the earth excite within my breaſt; and by thoſe ſentiments which make me ſhudder at the calamities, the exactions, the wars, and the maſſacres with which monarchy has cruſhed mankind: In ſhort, it is againſt all the hell of monarchy that I have declared war.

(Signed) THOMAS PAINE."

* *A deputy to the congreſs receives about a guinea and a half daily; and proviſions are cheaper in America than in France.*

ADDRESS

TO THE

ADDRESSERS

ON THE LATE

PROCLAMATION.

COULD I have commanded circumſtances with a wiſh, I know not of any that would have more generally promoted the progreſs of knowledge, than the late proclamation, and the numerous rotten borough and corporation addreſſes thereon. They have not only ſerved as advertiſements, but they have excited a ſpirit of enquiry into principles of government, and a deſire to read the RIGHTS OF MAN, in places, where that ſpirit and that work were before unknown.

The people of England, wearied and ſtunned with parties, and alternately deceived by each, had almoſt reſigned the prerogative of thinking. Even curioſity had expired, and a univerſal langour had ſpread itſelf over the land. The oppoſition was viſibly no other than a conteſt for power, whilſt the maſs of the nation ſtood torpidly by as the prize.

In this hopeleſs ſtate of things, the firſt part of the RIGHTS OF MAN made its appearance. It had to combat with a ſtrange mixture of prejudice and indifference; it ſtood expoſed to every ſpecies of newſpaper abuſe; and beſides this, it had to remove the obſtructions which

Mr. Burke's rude and outrageous attack on the French revolution had artfully raiſed.

But how eaſily does even the moſt illiterate reader diſtinguiſh the ſpontaneous ſenſations of the heart, from the laboured productions of the brain! Truth, whenever it can fully appear, is a thing ſo naturally familiar to the mind, that an acquaintance commences at firſt ſight. No artificial light, yet diſcovered, can diſplay all the properties of day-light; ſo neither can the beſt invented fiction fill the mind with every conviction which truth begets.

To overthrow Mr. Burke's fallacious work was ſcarcely the operation of a day. Even the phalanx of placemen and penſioners, who had given the tone to the multitude, by clamouring forth his political fame, became ſuddenly ſilent; and the final event to himſelf has been, that as he roſe like a rocket, he fell like the ſtick.

It ſeldom happens, that the mind reſts ſatisfied with the ſimple detection of error or impoſition.—Once put into motion, *that* motion ſoon becomes accelerated; where it had intended to ſtop, it diſcovers new reaſons to proceed, and renews and continues the purſuit far beyond the limits it firſt preſcribed to itſelf.—Thus it has happened to the people of England. From a detection of Mr. Burke's incoherent rhapſodies, and diſtorted facts, they began an enquiry into firſt principles of government, whilſt himſelf, like an object left far behind, became inviſible and forgotten.

Much as the firſt part of RIGHTS OF MAN impreſſed at its firſt appearance, the progreſſive mind ſoon diſcovered that it did not go far enough. It detected errors; it expoſed abſurdities; it ſhook the fabric of political ſuperſtition; it generated new ideas; but it did not produce a regular ſyſtem of principles in the room of thoſe which it diſplaced. And, if I may gueſs at the mind of the government party, they beheld it as an unexpected gale that would ſoon blow over, and they forbore, like ſailors in threatening weather, to whiſtle, leſt they ſhould increaſe the wind. Every thing, on their part, was profound ſilence.

When the ſecond part of "RIGHTS OF MAN, *combining principle and practice*," was preparing to appear, they affected, for a while, to act with the ſame policy as before; but finding their ſilence had no more influence in ſtilling the progreſs of the work, than it would have in ſtopping the progreſs of time, they changed their plan, and affected to treat it with clamorous contempt. The ſpeech-making placemen and penſioners, and place expectants, in both houſes of parliament, the *outs* as well as the *ins*, repreſented it as a filly, inſig-

nificant performance ; as a work incapable of producing any effect, as ſomething, which they were ſure the good ſenſe of the people would either deſpiſe or indignantly ſpurn ; but ſuch was the over-ſtrained awkwardneſs with which they harangued and encouraged each other, that in the very act of declaring their confidence they betrayed their fears.

As moſt of the rotten borough addreſſers are obſcured in holes and corners throughout the country, and to whom a newſpaper arrives as rarely as an almanac, they moſt probably have not had the opportunity of knowing how this part of the farce (the original prelude to all the addreſſes) has been acted. For *their* information, I will ſuſpend a while the more ſerious purpoſe of my letter, and entertain them with two or three ſpeeches in the laſt ſeſſion of parliament, which will ſerve them for politics till parliament meets again.

You muſt know, gentlemen, that the ſecond part of RIGHTS OF MAN (the book againſt which you have been preſenting addreſſes, though it is moſt probable, that many of you did not know it) was to have come out preciſely at the time that parliament laſt met. It happened not to be publiſhed till a few days after. But as it was well known that the book would ſhortly appear, the parliamentary orators entered into a very cordial coalition to cry the book down, and they began their attack by crying up the *bleſſings* of the conſtitution.

Had it been your fate to have been there, you could not but have been moved to the heart-and-pockets-felt congratulations that paſſed between all the parties on this ſubject of *bleſſings ;* for the *outs* enjoy places and penſions and ſinecures as well as the *ins*, and are as devoutly attached to the firm of the houſe.

One of the moſt conſpicuous of this motley groupe is the clerk of the court of king's bench, who calls himſelf lord Stormont. He is alſo called juſtice-general of Scotland, and keeper of Scoon (an oppoſition man) and he draws from the public for theſe nominal offices, not leſs, as I am informed, than ſix thouſand pounds a year, and he is, moſt probably, at the trouble of counting the money, and ſigning a receipt, to ſhew, perhaps, that he is qualified to be clerk as well as juſtice. He ſpoke as follows ;*

"That *we* ſhall *all* be unanimous, in expreſſing *our* attachment to "the conſtitution of theſe realms, *I am confident*. It is a ſubject "upon which there can be *no* divided opinion *in this houſe*. I do not "pretend to be deep read in the knowledge of the conſtitution, but

* *See his ſpeech in the Morning Chronicle of Feb.* 1.

" *I take upon me* to ſay, that from the extent of *my* knowledge *(for I* " *have ſo many thouſands a year for nothing)* it appears to *me*, that from " the period of the revolution, for it was by no means created then, " it has been, both in *theory* and *practice*, the *wiſeſt* ſyſtem that ever " was formed, I never was (he means he never was *till now)* a " dealer in *political cant*. My life has not been occupied in *that way*, " but the ſpeculations of late years *ſeem to have taken a turn, for which* " *I cannot account*. When I came into public life, the political pam- " phlets of the time, however they might be charged with the heat " and violence of parties, were agreed in extolling the radical beau- " ties of the conſtitution itſelf. I remember *(he means he has for-* " *gotten)* a moſt captivating eulogium on its *charms* by lord Boling- " broke, where he recommends his readers to contemplate it in all " reſpects, with the aſſurance that it would be found more eſtimable " the more it was *ſeen*. I do *not recollect* his preciſe words, but I " wiſh that men who write upon theſe ſubjects would take *this for their* " *model*, inſtead of the political pamphlets, which I am told, are now " in circulation (ſuch, I ſuppoſe, as *Rights of Man)*—pamphlets " which I have *not read*, and whoſe purport I know only by *report* " (he means perhaps by the *noiſe* they make). This, however, I am " ſure, that pamphlets tending to unſettle the public reverence for the " *conſtitution*, will have very little influence. They can do very little " harm—for *(by the bye he is no dealer in political cant) the Engliſh are a* " *ſober thinking people, and are more intelligent, more ſolid, more ſteady in* " *their opinions, than any people I ever had the fortune to ſee.* (This is " pretty well laid on, though, for a new beginner.) But if there " ſhould ever come a time when the propagation of thoſe doctrines " ſhould agitate the public mind, I am *ſure,* for *every one* of your " lordſhips, that no attack will be made on the conſtitution, from " which it is *truly ſaid* that *we* derive *all our* proſperity, without raiſ- " ing *every one* of your lordſhips to its ſupport. It will then be found " that there is no difference among *us*, but that *we* are *all* determined " to *ſtand* or *fall* together, in defence of the ineſtimable ſyſtem"— of places and penſions.

After Stormont, on the oppoſition ſide, ſat down, up roſe *another noble lord!* on the miniſterial ſide, *Grenville*. This man ought to be as ſtrong in the back as a mule, or the *ſire* of a mule, or it would crack with the weight of places and offices. He roſe, however, without feeling any incumbrance, full maſter of his weight; and thus ſaid *this* noble lord to *t'other* noble lord!

" The *patriotic* and *manly* manner in which the noble lord has de-

" clared *his* ſentiments on the ſubject of the conſtitution, demands *my* " *cordial* approbation. The noble viſcount has *proved*, that however " we may differ on *particular meaſures*, amidſt all the jars and diſſo- " nance of *parties*, we are unanimous in *principle*. There is a *perfect* and " *entire conſent* (between *us*) in the love and maintenance of the con- " ſtitution as *happily ſubſiſting*. It muſt *undoubtedly* give your lord- " ſhips *concern*, to find, that the *time is come!* (heigh ho!) when there " is *propriety* in theſe expreſſions of regard TO (o! o! o!) THE CON- " STITUTION. And that there are men (confound—their—po-li- " tics) who diſſeminate doctrines *hoſtile* to the *genuine ſpirit* of our *well* " *balanced ſyſtem*" (it is certainly well balanced when both ſides hold " places and penſions at once). I agree with the noble viſcount " that they have not (I hope) *much ſucceſs*. I am convinced that " there is no danger to be apprehended from their attempts: But " it is *truly* important and *conſolatory* (to us place-men, I ſuppoſe) to " know, that if there ſhould ever ariſe a ſerious alarm, there is but one " *ſpirit, one ſenſe* (and that ſenſe, I preſume is not *common ſenſe*) and " *one* determination in *this* houſe"——which undoubtedly is to hold all their places and penſions as long as they can.

Both thoſe ſpeeches (excepting the parts encloſed in parentheſis, which are added for the purpoſe of *illuſtration*) are copied *verbatim* from the Morning Chronicle of the 1ſt of February laſt; and when the ſituation of the ſpeakers is conſidered, the one in the oppoſition, and the other in the miniſtry, and both of them living at the public expence, by ſinecure, or nominal places and offices, it required a very unbluſhing front to be able to deliver them. Can thoſe men ſeriouſly ſuppoſe any nation to be ſo completely blind as not to ſee through them? Can Stormont imagine that the *political cant*, with which he has larded his harangue, will conceal the craft? Does he not know that there never was a cover large enough to hide *itſelf?* Or can Grenville believe, that his credit with the public encreaſes with his avarice for places?

But, if theſe orators will accept a ſervice from me, in return for the alluſions they have made to the *Rights of Man*, I will make a ſpeech for either of them to deliver on the excellence of the conſtitution, that ſhall be as much to the purpoſe as what they have ſpoken, or as *Bolingbroke's captivating encomium*. Here it is.

" That we ſhall all be unanimous in expreſſing our attachment to the conſtitution, I am confident. It is, my lords incomprehenſibly good: But the great wonder of all is the wiſdom; for it is, my lords, *the wiſeſt ſyſtem that ever was formed.*

"With reſpect to us, noble lords, though the world does not know it, it is very well known to us, that we have more wiſdom than we know what to do with; and what is ſtill better, my lords, we have it all in ſtock. I defy your lordſhips to prove, that a tittle of it has been uſed yet; and if we do but go on, my lords, with the frugality we have hitherto done, we ſhall leave to our heirs and ſucceſſors, when we go out of the world, the whole ſtock of wiſdom, *untouched*, that we brought in; and there is no doubt but they will follow our example. This, my lords, is one of the bleſſed effects of the hereditary ſyſtem; for we can never be without wiſdom ſo long as we keep it by us, and do not uſe it.

"But, my lords, as all this wiſdom is hereditary property, for the ſole benefit of us and our heirs, and it is neceſſary that the people ſhould know where to get a ſupply for their own uſe, the excellence of our conſtitution has provided a king for this very purpoſe, and for *no other*. But, my lords, I perceive a defect to which the conſtitution is ſubject, and which I propoſe to remedy by bringing a bill into parliament for that purpoſe.

"The conſtitution, my lords, out of delicacy, I preſume, has left it as a matter of *choice* to a king whether he will be wiſe or not. It has not, I mean, my lords, inſiſted upon it as a conſtitutional point, which, I conceive, it ought to have done; for I pledge myſelf to your lordſhips to prove, and that with *true patriotic boldneſs*, that he has *no choice in the matter*. The bill, my lords, that I ſhall bring in will be to declare, that the conſtitution, according to the true intent and meaning thereof, does not inveſt the king with this choice; our anceſtors were too wiſe to do that; and, in order to prevent any doubts that might otherwiſe ariſe, I ſhall prepare, my lords, an enacting clauſe, to fix the wiſdom of kings, by act of parliament; and then, my lords, our conſtitution will be the wonder of the world!

"Wiſdom, my lords, is the one thing needful; but that there may be no miſtake in this matter, and that we may proceed conſiſtently with the true wiſdom of the conſtitution, I ſhall propoſe a *certain criterion* whereby the *exact quantity of wiſdom* neceſſary for a king may be known. [Here ſhould be a cry of—Hear him! Hear him!].

"It is recorded, my lords, in the Statutes at large of the Jews, "a book, my lords, which I have not read, and whoſe purport I know "only by report," *but perhaps the bench of biſhops can recollect ſomething about it*, that Saul gave the moſt convincing proofs of royal wiſdom before he was made a king, *for he was ſent to ſeek his father's aſſes and he could not find them.*

" Here, my lords, we have, moſt happily for us, a caſe in point: This precedent ought to be eſtabliſhed by act of parliament; and every king, before he be crowned, ſhould be ſent to ſeek his father's aſſes, and if he cannot find them, he ſhall be declared wiſe enough to be king, according to the true meaning of our excellent conſtitution. All, therefore, my lords, that will be neceſſary to be done, by the enacting clauſe that I ſhall bring in, will be to inveſt the king beforehand with the quantity of wiſdom neceſſary for this purpoſe, leſt he ſhould happen not to poſſeſs it; and this, my lords, we can do without making uſe of any of our own.

" We further read, my lords, in the ſaid Statutes at large of the Jews, that Samuel, who certainly was as mad as any man-of-rights-man now a-days, (hear him! hear him!) was diſpleaſed, and even exaſperated, at the propoſal of the Jews to have a king, and he warned them againſt it with all that aſſurance and impudence of which he was maſter. I have been my lords, at the trouble of going all the way to *Paternoſter-row*, to procure an extract from the printed copy. I was told that I ſhould meet with it there, or in *Amen-corner*, for I was then going, my lords, to rummage for it among the curioſities of the *antiquarian ſociety*.—I will read the extract to your lordſhips, to ſhew how little Samuel knew of the matter.

" The extract, my lords, is from 1 *Samuel*, chap. 8.

" And Samuel told all the words of the lord unto the people that " aſked of him a king.

" And he ſaid, This will be the manner of the king that ſhall " reign over you. He will take your ſons and appoint them for " himſelf, for his chariots, and to be his horſemen; and ſome ſhall " run before his chariots.

" And he will appoint him captains over thouſands, and captains " over fifties, and will ſet them to ear his ground and to reap his har- " veſt, and to make his inſtruments of war, and inſtruments of his " chariots.

" And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be " cooks, and to be bakers.

" And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, even the beſt of them, and give them to his ſervants.

" And he will take the tenth of your ſeed, and of your vineyards, " and give to his officers, and to his ſervants.

" And he will he take your men-ſervants, and your maid-ſervants, " and your goodlieſt young men, and your aſſes, and put them to his " work.

" And he will take the tenth of your ſheep, and ye ſhall be his " ſervants.

" And ye ſhall cry out in that day, becauſe of your king, which " ye ſhall have choſen you; and the lord will not hear you on that " day."

" Now, my lords, what can we think of this man Samuel? Is there a word of truth, or any thing like truth, in all that he has ſaid? He pretended to be a prophet, or a wiſe man, but has not the event proved him to be a fool, or an incendiary? Look around you, my lords, and ſee if any thing has happened that he pretended to foretel? Has not the moſt profound peace reigned throughout the world ever ſince kings were in faſhion? Are not, for example, the preſent kings of Europe the moſt peaceable of mankind, and the empreſs of Ruſſia the very milk of human kindneſs? It would not be worth having kings, my lords, if it were not that they never go to war.

" If we look at home, my lords, do we not ſee the ſame things here as are ſeen every where elſe? Are our young men taken to be horſemen, or foot ſoldiers, any more than in Germany or in Pruſſia, or in Hanover or in Heſſe? Are not our ſailors as ſafe at land as at ſea? Are they ever dragged from their homes, like oxen to the ſlaughter-houſe, to ſerve on board ſhips of war? When they return from the perils of a long voyage with the merchandize of diſtant countries, does not every man ſit down under his own vine and his own fig-tree, in perfect ſecurity? Is the tenth of our ſeed taken by tax-gatherers, or is any part of it given to the king's ſervants? In ſhort, *is not every thing as free from taxes as the light from Heaven?*

" Ah! my lords, do we not ſee the bleſſed effect of having kings in every thing we look at? Is not the G. R. or the broad R. ſtampt upon every thing? Even the ſhoes, the gloves, and the hats that we wear, are enriched with the impreſſion, and all our candles blaze a burnt-offering.

" Beſides theſe bleſſings, my lords, that cover us from the ſole of the foot to the crown of the head, do we not ſee a race of youths growing up to be kings, who are the very paragons of virtue? There is not one of them, my lords, but might be truſted with untold gold, as ſafely as the other. Are they not "*more ſober, intelligent, more ſo-*" *lid, more ſteady,*" and withal, more learned, more wiſe, more every thing, than any youths *we* "*ever had the fortune to ſee.*" Ah! my lords, they are a *hopeful family.*

" The bleſſed proſpect of ſucceſſion, which the nation has at this moment before its eyes, is a moſt undeniable proof of the excellence of

our conſtitution, and of the bleſſed hereditary ſyſtem; for nothing, my lords, but a conſtitution founded on the trueſt and pureſt wiſdom could admit ſuch heaven-born and heaven-taught characters into the government.—Permit me now, my lords, to recal your attention to the libellous chapter I have juſt read about kings. I mention this, my lords, becauſe it is my intention to move for a bill to be brought into parliament to expunge that chapter from the Bible, and that the lord chancellor, with the aſſiſtance of the prince of Wales, the duke of York, and the duke of Clarence, be requeſted to write a chapter in the room of it; and that Mr. Burke do ſee that it be truly canonical, and faithfully inſerted."—FINIS.

If the clerk of the court of king's bench ſhould chooſe to be the author of this luminous encomium on the conſtitution, I hope he will get it well by heart before he attempts to deliver it, and not have to apologize to parliament, as he did in the caſe of Bolingbroke's encomium, for forgetting his leſſon; and, with this admonition, I leave him.

Having thus informed the addreſſers of what paſſed at the meeting of parliament, I return to take up the ſubject at the part where I broke off, in order to introduce the preceding ſpeeches.

I was then ſtating, that the firſt policy of the government party was ſilence, and the next, clamorous contempt; but as people generally chooſe to read and judge for themſelves, the work ſtill went on, and the affectation of contempt, like the ſilence that preceded it, paſſed for nothing.

Thus foiled in their ſecond ſcheme, their evil genius, like a will-with-a-wiſp, led them to a third; when all at once, as if it had been unfolded to them by a fortune-teller, Mr. Dundas had diſcovered it by ſecond ſight, this once harmleſs, inſignificant book, without undergoing the alteration of a ſingle letter, became a moſt wicked and dangerous libel. The whole cabinet, like a ſhip's crew, became alarmed; all hands were piped upon deck, as if a conſpiracy of elements was forming around them, and out came the proclamation and the proſecution; and addreſſes ſupplied the place of prayers.

Ye ſilly ſwains, thought I to myſelf, why do you torment yourſelves thus? The RIGHTS OF MAN is a book calmly and rationally written; why then are you ſo diſturbed? Did you ſee how little or how ſuſpicious ſuch conduct makes you appear, even cunning alone, had you no other faculty, would huſh you into prudence. The plans, principles, and arguments, contained in that work, are placed before the eyes of the nation, and of the world, in a fair, open, and manly

manner, and nothing more is neceſſary than to refute them. Do this, and the whole is done; but if ye cannot, ſo neither can ye ſuppreſs the reading, nor convict the author; for the law, in the opinion of all good men, would convict itſelf, that ſhould condemn what cannot be refuted.

Having now ſhewn the addreſſers the ſeveral ſtages of the buſineſs, prior to their being called upon, like Cæſar in the Tyber, crying to Caſſius, "*help, Caſſius, or I ſink!*" I next come to remark on the policy of the government, in promoting addreſſes; on the conſequences naturally reſulting therefrom; and on the conduct of the perſons concerned.

With reſpect to the policy, it evidently carries with it every mark and feature of diſguiſed fear. And it will hereafter be placed in the hiſtory of extraordinary things, that a pamphlet ſhould be produced by an individual, unconnected with any ſect or party, and not ſeeking to make any, and almoſt a ſtranger in the land, that ſhould completely frighten a whole government, and that in the midſt of its moſt triumphant ſecurity. Such a circumſtance cannot fail to prove, that either the pamphlet has irreſiſtible powers, or the government very extraordinary defects, or both. The nation exhibits no ſigns of fear at the Rights of Man; why then ſhould the government, unleſs the intereſt of the two are really oppoſite to each other, and the ſecret is beginning to be known? That there are two diſtinct claſſes of men in the nation, thoſe who pay taxes, and thoſe who receive and live upon the taxes, is evident at firſt ſight; and when taxation is carried to exceſs, it cannot fail to diſunite thoſe two, and ſomething of this kind is now beginning to appear.

It is alſo curious to obſerve, amidſt all the fume and buſtle about proclamations and addreſſes, kept up by a few noiſy and intereſted men, how little the maſs of the nation ſeem to care about either. They appear to me, by the indifference they ſhew, not to believe a word the proclamation contains; and as to the addreſſes, they travel to London with the ſilence of a funeral, and having announced their arrival in the Gazette, are depoſited with the aſhes of their predeceſſors, and Mr. Dundas writes their *hic jacent*.

One of the beſt effects which the proclamation, and its echo the addreſſes have had, has been that of exciting and ſpreading curioſity; and it requires only a ſingle reflection to diſcover, that the object of all curioſity is knowledge. When the maſs of the nation ſaw that placemen, penſioners, and borough-mongers, were the perſons that ſtood forward to promote addreſſes, it could not fail to create ſuſpi-

cions that the public good was not their object; that the character of the books, or writings, to which ſuch perſons obſcurely alluded, not daring to mention them, was directly contrary to what they deſcribed them to be, and that it was neceſſary that every man, for his own ſatisfaction, ſhould exerciſe his proper right, and read and judge for himſelf.

But how will the perſons who have been induced to read the *Rights of Man*, by the clamour that has been raiſed againſt it, be ſurprized to find, that, inſtead of a wicked, inflammatory work, inſtead of a licentious and profligate performance, it abounds with principles of government that are uncontrovertible—with arguments which every reader will feel, are unanſwerable—with plans for the increaſe of commerce and manufactures—for the extinction of war—for the education of the children of the poor—for the comfortable ſupport of the aged and decayed perſons of both ſexes—for the relief of the army and navy, and, in ſhort, for the promotion of every thing that can benefit the moral, civil and political condition of man.

Why, then, ſome calm obſerver will aſk, why is the work proſecuted, if theſe be the goodly matters it contains? I will tell thee, friend; it contains alſo a plan for the reduction of taxes, for leſſening the immenſe expences of government, for aboliſhing places and penſions; and it propoſes applying the redundant taxes, that ſhall be ſaved by theſe reforms, to the purpoſes mentioned in the former paragraph, inſtead of applying them to the ſupport of idle and profligate placemen and penſioners.

Is it, then, any wonder that placemen and penſioners, and the whole train of court expectants, ſhould become the promoters of addreſſes, proclamations, and proſecutions? or, is it any wonder that corporations and rotten boroughs, which are attacked and expoſed, both in the Firſt and Second Parts of the *Rights of Man* as unjuſt monopolies and public nuiſances, ſhould join in the cavalcade? Yet theſe are the ſources from which addreſſes have ſprung. Had not ſuch perſons came forward to oppoſe the *Rights of Man*, I ſhould have doubted the efficacy of my own writings: But thoſe oppoſers have now proved to me, that the blow was well directed, and they have done it juſtice, by confeſſing the ſmart.

The principal deception in this buſineſs of addreſſes has been, that the promoters of them have not come forward in their proper characters. They have aſſumed to paſs themſelves upon the public, as a part of the public bearing a ſhare of the burden of taxes, and acting for the public good; whereas, they are in general that part of it that

adds to the public burden, by living on the produce of the public taxes. They are to the public what the locuſts are to the tree: The burden would be leſs, and the proſperity would be greater, if they were ſhaken off.

"I do not come here," ſaid ONSLOW, at the Surry county meeting "as lord lieutenant and cuſtos rotulorum of the county, but I "come here as a plain country gentleman." The fact is, that he came there as what he was, and as no other, and conſequently he came as one of the beings I have been deſcribing. If it be the character of a gentleman to be fed by the public, as a pauper is by the pariſh, Onſlow has a fair claim to the title; and the ſame deſcription will ſuit the duke of Richmond, who led the addreſs at the Suſſex meeting.—He alſo may ſet up for a gentleman.

As to the meeting in the next adjoining county (Kent) it was a ſcene of diſgrace. About two hundred perſons met, when a ſmall part of them drew privately away from the reſt, and voted an addreſs: The conſequence of which was, that they got together by the ears, and produced a riot in the very act of producing an addreſs to prevent riots.

That the proclamation and the addreſſes have failed of their intended effect, may be collected from the ſilence which the government party itſelf obſerves, The number of addreſſes has been weekly retailed in the Gazette; but the number of addreſſers has been concealed. Several of the addreſſes have been voted by not more than ten or twelve perſons; and a conſiderable number of them by not more than thirty. The whole number of addreſſes preſented at the time of writing this letter is three hundred and twenty (rotten boroughs and corporations included) and even admitting, on an average, one hundred addreſſers to each addreſs, the whole number of addreſſers would be but thirty-two thouſand, and nearly three months have been taken up in procuring this number. That the ſucceſs of the proclamation has been leſs than the ſucceſs of the work it was intended to diſcourage, is a matter within my own knowledge; for a greater number of the cheap edition of the firſt and ſecond parts of Rights of Man has been ſold in the ſpace only of one month, than the whole number of addreſſers (admitting them to be thirty-two thouſand) have amounted to in three months.

It is a dangerous attempt in any government to ſay to a nation, "*thou ſhalt not read.*" This is now done in Spain, and was formerly done under the old government of France; but it ſerved to procure the downfal of the latter, and is ſubverting that of the former; and

it will have the same tendency in all countries; because *thought* by some means or other, is got abroad into the world, and cannot be restrained, though reading may.

If Rights of Man were a book that deserved the vile description which the promoters of the address have given of it, why did not these men prove their charge, and satisfy the people, by producing it, and reading it publicly? This most certainly ought to have been done, and would also have been done, had they believed it would have answered their purpose. But the fact is, that the book contains truths, which those time-servers dreaded to hear, and dreaded that the people should know; and it is now following up the addresses in every part of the nation, and convicting them of falsehoods.

Among the unwarrantable proceedings to which the proclamation has given rise, the meetings of the justices in several of the towns and counties ought to be noticed. Those men have assumed to re-act the farce of general warrants, and to suppress, by their own authority, whatever publications they please. This is an attempt at power, equalled only by the conduct of the minor despots of the most despotic governments in Europe, and yet those justices affect to call England a free country. But even this, perhaps, like the scheme for garrisoning the country, by building military barracks, is necessary to awaken the country to a sense of its rights, and, as such, it will have a good effect.

Another part of the conduct of such justices has been, that of threatening to take away the licences from taverns and public-houses, where the inhabitants of the neighbourhood associated to read and discuss the principles of government, and to inform each other thereon. This, again, is similar to what is doing in Spain and Russia; and the reflection which it cannot fail to suggest is, that the principles and conduct of any government must be bad, when that government dreads and startles at discussion, and seeks security by a prevention of knowledge.

If the government, or the constitution, or by whatever name it be called, be that miracle of perfection which the proclamation and the addresses have trumpeted it forth to be, it ought to have defied discussion and investigation, instead of dreading it. Whereas every attempt it makes, either by proclamation, prosecution, or address, to suppress investigation, is a confession that it feels itself unable to bear it. It is error only, and not truth, that shrinks from enquiry. All the numerous pamphlets, and all the newspaper falsehood and abuse, that have been published against "Rights of Man," have fallen

before it like pointleſs arrows; and, in like manner, would any work have fallen before the conſtitution, had the conſtitution, as it is called, been founded on as good political principles as thoſe on which the Rights of Man is written.

It is a good conſtitution for courtiers, placemen, penſioners, borough holders, and the leaders of parties, and theſe are the men that have been the active leaders of addreſſes; but it is a bad conſtitution for at leaſt ninety-nine parts of the nation out of an hundred, and this truth is every day making its way.

It is bad, firſt, becauſe it entails upon the nation the unneceſſary expence of ſupporting three forms and ſyſtems of government at once, namely the monarchical, the ariſtocratical, and the democratical.

Secondly, becauſe it is impoſſible to unite ſuch a diſcordant compoſition by any other means than perpetual corruption; and therefore the corruption ſo loudly and ſo univerſally complained of, is no other than the natural conſequence of ſuch an unnatural compound of governments; and in this conſiſts that excellence which the numerous herd of placemen and penſioners ſo loudly extol and which, at the ſame time, occaſions that enormous load of taxes under which the reſt of the nation groans.

Among the maſs of national deluſions calculated to amuſe and impoſe upon the multitude, the ſtanding one has been, that of flattering them into taxes, by calling the government (or as they pleaſe to expreſs it, the Engliſh conſtitution) "*the envy and admiration of the* "*world.*" Scarcely an addreſs has been voted in which ſome of the ſpeakers have not uttered this hackneyed nonſenſical falſehood.

Two revolutions have taken place, thoſe of America and France, and both of them have rejected the unnatural compounded ſyſtem of the Engliſh government; America has declared againſt all hereditary government, and eſtabliſhed the repreſentative ſyſtem of government only. France has entirely rejected the ariſtocratical part, and is now diſcovering the abſurdity of the monarchical, and is approaching faſt to the repreſentative ſyſtem. On what ground then, do theſe men continue a declaration, reſpecting what they call the *envy and admiration of other nations*, which the voluntary practice of ſuch nations, as have had the opportunity of eſtabliſhing government, contradicts and falſifies. Will ſuch men never confine themſelves to truth? Will they be for ever the deceivers of the people?

But I will go farther, and ſhow, that were government now to begin in England, the people could not be brought to eſtabliſh the ſame ſyſtem they now ſubmit to.

In ſpeaking upon this ſubject (or on any other) *on the pure ground of principle*, antiquity and precedent ceaſe to be authority, and hoary-headed error loſes its effect. The reaſonableneſs and propriety of things muſt be examined abſtractedly from cuſtom and uſage; and in this point of view, the right which grows into practice to-day is as much a right, and as old in principle and theory, as if it had the cuſtomary ſanction of a thouſand ages. Principles have no connection with time, nor characters with names.

To ſay that the government of this country is compoſed of king, lords, and commons, is the mere phraſeology of cuſtom. It is compoſed of men; and whoever the men be to whom the government of any country is intruſted, they ought to be the beſt and wiſeſt that can be found, and if they are not ſo, they are not fit for the ſtation. A man derives no more excellence from the change of a name, or calling him king, or calling him lord, than I ſhould do by changing my name from Thomas to George, or from Paine to Guelph. I ſhould not be a whit the more able to write a book, becauſe my name were altered; neither would any man, now called a king or a lord, have a whit the more ſenſe than he now has, were he to call himſelf Thomas Paine.

As to the word "commons," applied as it is in England, it is a term of degradation and reproach, and ought to be aboliſhed. It is a term unknown in free countries.

But to the point.—Let us ſuppoſe that government was now to begin in England, and that the plan of government, offered to the nation for its approbation or rejection, conſiſted of the following parts:

Firſt.—That ſome one individual ſhould be taken from all the reſt of the nation, and to whom all the reſt ſhould ſwear obedience, and never be permitted to ſit down in his preſence, and that they ſhould give him one million ſterling a year.—That the nation ſhould never after have power or authority to make laws but with his expreſs conſent, and that his ſons and his ſons' ſons, whether wiſe or fooliſh, good men or bad, fit or unfit, ſhould have the ſame power, and alſo the ſame money annually paid to them for ever.

Secondly.—That there ſhould be two houſes of legiſlators to aſſiſt in making laws, one of which ſhould, in the firſt inſtance, be entirely appointed by the aforeſaid perſon, and that their ſons and their ſons' ſons, whether wiſe or fooliſh, good men or bad, fit or unfit, ſhould for ever after be hereditary legiſlators.

Thirdly.—That the other houſe ſhould be choſen in the ſame manner as the houſe now called the houſe of commons is choſen, and

ſhould be ſubject to the control of the two aforeſaid hereditary powers in all things.

It would be impoſſible to cram ſuch a farrago of impoſition and abſurdity down the throat of this or any other nation, that were capable of reaſoning upon its rights and its intereſt.

They would aſk, in the firſt place, on what ground of right, or on what principle, ſuch irrational and prepoſterous diſtinctions could, or ought to be made; and what pretenſions any man could have, or what ſervices he could render, to entitle him to a million a year? They would go farther, and revolt at the idea of conſigning their children and their children's children, to the domination of perſons hereafter to be born, who might, for any thing they could foreſee, turn out to be knaves or fools; and they would finally diſcover, that the project of hereditary governors and legiſlators *was a treaſonable uſurpation over the rights of poſterity*. Not only the calm dictates of reaſon, and the force of natural affection, but the integrity of manly pride, would impel men to ſpurn ſuch propoſals.

From the groſſer abſurdities of ſuch a ſcheme, they would extend their examination to the practical defects—They would ſoon ſee that it would end in tyranny, accompliſhed by fraud. That in the operation of it, it would be two to one againſt them, becauſe the two parts that were to be made hereditary, would form a common intereſt, and ſtick to each other; and that themſelves and repreſentatives would become no better than hewers of wood and drawers of water for the other parts of the government.—Yet call one of thoſe powers king, the other lords, and the third, the commons, and it gives the model of what is called the Engliſh government.

I have aſſerted, and have ſhewn, both in the firſt and ſecond parts of *Rights of Man*, that there is not ſuch a thing as an Engliſh conſtitution, and that the people have yet a conſtitution to form. *A conſtitution is a thing antecedent to a government; it is the act of the people creating a government and giving it powers, and defining the limits and exerciſe of the powers ſo given.* But whenever did the people of England, acting in their original conſtituent character, by a delegation elected for that expreſs purpoſe, declare and ſay, "*We the people* "*of this land, do conſtitute and appoint this to be our ſyſtem and form of* "*government?*" The government has aſſumed to conſtitute itſelf, but it never was conſtituted by the people, in whom alone the right of conſtituting reſides.

I will here recite the preamble to the federal conſtitution of the United States of America. I have ſhewn in the ſecond part of *Rights*

of Man, the manner by which the conſtitution was formed and afterwards ratified; and to which I refer the reader.—The preamble is in the following words:

"WE, THE PEOPLE, of the United States, in order to form "a more perfect union, eſtabliſh juſtice, inſure domeſtic tran- "quility, provide for common defence, promote the general "welfare, and ſecure the bleſſings of liberty to ourſelves and our "poſterity, DO ORDAIN AND ESTABLISH THIS CONSTITU- "TION for the United States of America."

Then follow the ſeveral articles which appoint the manner in which the ſeveral component parts of the government, legiſlative and executive, ſhall be elected, and the period of their duration, and the powers they ſhall have: Alſo, the manner by which future additions, alterations, or amendments, ſhall be made to the conſtitution. Conſequently, every improvement that can be made in the ſcience of government, follows in that country as a matter of order. It is only in governments founded on aſſumption and falſe principles, that reaſoning upon, and inveſtigating ſyſtems and principles of government, and ſhewing their ſeveral excellencies and defects, are termed libellous and ſeditious. Theſe terms were made part of the charge brought againſt Locke, Hampden, and Sydney, and will continue to be brought againſt all good men, ſo long as bad governments ſhall continue.

The government of this country has been oſtentatiouſly giving challenges for more than an hundred years paſt, upon what it called its own excellence and perfection. Scarcely a king's ſpeech, or a parliamentary ſpeech, has been uttered, in which this glove has not been thrown, till the world has been inſulted with their challenges. But it now appears that all this was vapour and vain-boaſting, or that it was intended to conceal abuſes and defects, and huſh the people into taxes. I have taken the challenge up, and in behalf of the public have ſhewn, in a fair, open, and candid manner, both the radical and practical defects of the ſyſtem; when, lo! thoſe champions of the civil liſt have fled away, and ſent the attorney-general to deny the challenge, by turning the acceptance of it into an attack, and defending their places and penſions by a proſecution.

I will here drop this part of the ſubject, and ſtate a few particulars reſpecting the proſecution now pending, by which the addreſſers will ſee that they have been uſed as tools to the proſecuting party and their dependants. The caſe is as follows:

The original edition of the firſt and ſecond parts of RIGHTS OF

MAN, having been expenſively printed (in the modern ſtyle of printing pamphlets, that they might be bound up with Mr. Burke's reflections on the French revolution), the high price precluded the generality of people from purchaſing; and many applications were made to me from various parts of the country to print the work in a cheaper manner. The people of Sheffield requeſted leave to print two thouſand copies for themſelves, with which requeſt I immediately complied. The ſame requeſt came to me from Rotherham, from Leiceſter, from Cheſter, from ſeveral towns in Scotland; and Mr. James Mackintoſh, author of *Vindiciæ Gallicia*, brought me a requeſt from Warwickſhire, for leave to print ten thouſand copies in that county. I had already ſent a cheap edition to Scotland; and finding the applications increaſe, I concluded that the beſt method of complying therewith, would be to print a very numerous edition in London, under my own direction, by which means the work would be more perfect, and the price be reduced lower than it could be by *printing* ſmall editions in the country of only a few thouſands each.

The cheap edition of the firſt part was begun about the middle of laſt April, and from that moment, and not before, I expected a proſecution, and the event has proved that I was not miſtaken. I had then occaſion to write to Mr. Thomas Walker of Mancheſter, and after informing him of my intention of giving up the work for the purpoſe of general information, I informed him of what I apprehended would be the conſequence; that while the work was at a price that precluded an extenſive circulation, the government party, not able to controvert the plans, arguments, and principles it contained, had choſen to remain ſilent; but that I expected they would make an attempt to deprive the maſs of the nation, and eſpecially the poor, of the right of reading, by the pretence of proſecuting either the author or the publiſher, or both. They choſe to begin with the publiſher.

Nearly a month, however, paſſed, before I had any information given me of their intentions. I was then at Bromley, in Kent, upon which I came immediately to town (May 14); and went to Mr. Jordan, the publiſher of the original edition. He had that evening been ſerved with a ſummons, to appear at the court of king's bench on the Monday following, but for what purpoſe was not ſtated. Suppoſing it to be on account of the work, I appointed a meeting with him on the next morning, which was accordingly had, when I provided an attorney, and took the expence of the defence on myſelf.

But finding afterwards that he abſented himſelf from the attorney employed, and had engaged another, and that he had been cloſeted with the ſolicitors of the treaſury, I left him to follow his own choice, and he choſe to plead guilty. This he might do if he pleaſed; and I make no objection againſt him for it. I believe that his idea by the word *guilty*, was no other than declaring himſelf to be the publiſher, without any regard to the merits or demerits of the work; for were it to be conſtrued otherwiſe, it would amount to the abſurdity of converting a publiſher into a jury, and his confeſſion into a verdict upon the work itſelf. This would be the higheſt poſſible refinement upon packing of juries.

On the 21ſt of May, they commenced their proſecution againſt me, as the author, by leaving a ſummons at my lodgings in town, to appear at the court of king's bench on the 8th of June following; and on the ſame day (May 21,) *they iſſued alſo their proclamation.* Thus the court of St. James's, and the court of king's bench, were playing into each other's hands at the ſame inſtant of time, and the farce of addreſſes brought up the rear; and this mode of proceeding is called by the proſtituted name of law. Such a thundering rapidity, after a miniſterial dormancy of almoſt eighteen months, can be attributed to no other cauſe than their having gained information of the forwardneſs of the cheap edition, and the dread they felt at the progreſſive increaſe of political knowledge.

I was ſtrongly adviſed by ſeveral gentlemen, as well thoſe in the practice of the law, as others, to prefer a bill of indictment againſt the publiſher of the proclamation, as a publication tending to influence, or rather to dictate the verdict of a jury on the iſſue of a matter then pending; but it appeared to me much better to avail myſelf of the opportunity which ſuch a precedent juſtified me in uſing, by meeting the proclamation and the addreſſes on their own ground, and publicly defending the work which had been thus unwarrantably attacked and traduced.—And conſcious as I now am, that the work entitled, Rights of Man, ſo far from being, as has been maliciouſly or erroneouſly repreſented, a falſe, wicked, and ſeditious libel, is a work abounding with unanſwerable truths, with principles of the pureſt morality and benevolence, and with arguments not to be controverted.—Conſcious, I ſay, of theſe things, and having no object in view, but the happineſs of mankind, I have now put the matter to the beſt proof in my power, by giving to the public a cheap edition of the firſt and ſecond parts of that work. Let every man read and judge for himſelf, not only of the merits or demerits of the work,

but of the matters therein contained, which relate to his own intereſt and happineſs.

If, to expoſe the fraud and impoſition of monarchy, and every ſpecies of hereditary government—to leſſen the oppreſſion of taxes—to propoſe plans for the education of helpleſs infancy, and the comfortable ſupport of the aged and diſtreſſed—to endeavour to conciliate nations to each other—to extirpate the horrid practice of war—to promote univerſal peace, civilization, and commerce—and to break the chains of political ſuperſtition, and raiſe degraded man to his proper rank;—if theſe things be libellous, let me live the life of a libeller, and let the name of LIBELLER be engraved on my tomb.

Of all the weak and ill judged meaſures which fear, ignorance, or arrogance could ſuggeſt, the proclamation, and the project for addreſſes, are two of the worſt. They ſerved to advertiſe the work which the promoters of thoſe meaſures wiſhed to keep unknown; and in doing this, they offered violence to the judgment of the people, by calling on them to condemn what they forbad them to know; and they put the ſtrength of their party to that hazardous iſſue that prudence would have avoided.—The county meeting for Middleſex was attended by only oue hundred and eighteen addreſſers. They, no doubt, expected, that thouſands would flock to their ſtandard, and clamour againſt the Rights of Man. But the caſe moſt probably is, that men, in all countries, are not ſo blind to their rights, and their intereſt, as governments believe.

Having thus ſhewn the extraordinary manner in which the government party commenced their attack, I proceed to offer a few obſervations on the proſecution, and on the mode of trial by ſpecial jury.

In the firſt place, I have written a book; and if it cannot be refuted, it cannot be condemned. But I do not conſider the proſecution as particularly levelled againſt me, but againſt the general right, or the right of every man, of inveſtigating ſyſtems and principles of government, and ſhewing their ſeveral excellencies or defects. If the preſs be free only to flatter government, as Mr. Burke has done, and to cry up and extol what certain court ſycophants are pleaſed to call a "glorious conſtitution," and not free to examine into its errors or abuſes, or whether a conſtitution really exiſt or not, ſuch freedom is no other than that of Spain, Turkey, or Ruſſia; and a jury in this caſe, would not be a jury to try, but an inquiſition to condemn.

I have aſſerted, and by fair and open argument maintained, the

right of every nation at all times, to eſtabliſh ſuch a ſyſtem and form of government for itſelf as beſt accords with its diſpoſition, intereſt and happineſs; and to change or alter it as it ſees occaſion. Will any jury deny to the nation this right? If they do, they are traitors, and their verdict would be null and void. And if they admit the right, the means muſt be admitted alſo; for it would be the higheſt abſurdity to ſay, that the right exiſted, but the means did not. The queſtion then is, What are the means by which the poſſeſſion and exerciſe of this national right are to be ſecured! The anſwer will be, that of maintaining, inviolably, the right of inveſtigation; for inveſtigation always ſerves to detect error, and to bring forth truth.

I have, as an individual, given my opinion upon what I believe to be not only the beſt, but the true ſyſtem of government, which is the repreſentative ſyſtem, and I have given reaſons for that opinion.

Firſt. Becauſe in the repreſentative ſyſtem, no office of very extraordinary power, or extravagant pay, is attached to any individual; and conſequently there is nothing to excite thoſe national contentions and civil wars, with which countries under monarchical governments are frequently convulſed, and of which the hiſtory of England exhibits ſuch numerous inſtances.

Secondly. Becauſe the repreſentative is a ſyſtem of government always in maturity; whereas monarchical government fluctuates through all the ſtages, from non-age to dotage.

Thirdly. Becauſe the repreſentative ſyſtem admits of none but men, properly qualified, into the government, or removes them if they prove to be otherwiſe. Whereas in the hereditary ſyſtem, a nation may be encumbered with a knave or an ideot for a whole life-time, and not be benefited by a ſucceſſor.

Fourthly. Becauſe there does not exiſt a right to eſtabliſh hereditary government; or, in other words, hereditary ſucceſſors; becauſe hereditary government always means a government yet to come, and the caſe always is, that thoſe who are to live afterwards have the ſame right to eſtabliſh government for themſelves, as the people had who lived before them; and, therefore, all laws attempting to eſtabliſh hereditary government, are founded on aſſumption and political fiction.

If theſe poſitions be truths, and I challenge any man to prove the contrary; if they tend to inſtruct and enlighten mankind, and to free them from error, oppreſſion, and political ſuperſtition, which are the objects I have in view in publiſhing them, that jury would commit an

act of injuſtice to their country, and to me, if not an act of perjury, that ſhould call them *falſe*, *wicked*, and *malicious*.

Dragonetti, in his treatiſe, "On Virtues and Rewards," has a paragraph worthy of being recorded in every country of the world—"The ſcience (ſays he) of the politician, conſiſts in fixing the true point of happineſs and freedom. Thoſe men would deſerve the gratitude of ages, who ſhould diſcover a mode of government that contained the greateſt ſum of *individual happineſs* with the leaſt *national expence*." But if juries are to be made uſe of to prohibit enquiry, to ſuppreſs truth, and to ſtop the progreſs of knowledge, this boaſted palladium of liberty becomes the moſt ſucceſsful inſtrument of tyranny.

Among the arts practiſed at the bar, and from the bench, to impoſe upon the underſtanding of a jury, and obtain a verdict where the conſciences of men could not otherwiſe conſent, one of the moſt ſucceſsful has been that of calling *truth a libel*, and of inſinuating, that the words "falſely, wickedly, and maliciouſly," though they are made the formidable and high ſounding part of the charge, are, not matters for conſideration with a jury. For what purpoſe, then, are they retained, unleſs it be for that of impoſition and wilful defamation?

I cannot conceive a greater violation of order, nor a more abominable inſult upon morality, and upon human underſtanding, than to ſee a man ſitting in the judgment ſeat, affecting by an antiquated foppery of dreſs to impreſs the audience with awe; then cauſing witneſſes and jury to be ſworn to truth and juſtice, himſelf having officially ſworn the ſame; then cauſing to be read a proſecution againſt a man, charging him with having *wickedly and maliciouſly written and publiſhed a certain falſe, wicked, and ſeditious book;* and having gone through all this with a ſhew of ſolemnity, as if he ſaw the eye of the Almighty darting through the roof of the building like a ray of light, turn in an inſtant, the whole into a farce, and in order to obtain a verdict that could not otherwiſe be obtained, tell the jury that the charge of *falſely, wickedly, and ſeditiouſly*, meant nothing, that *truth* was out of the queſtion; and that whether the perſon accuſed ſpoke truth or falſehood, or intended *virtuouſly or wickedly*, was the ſame thing; and finally conclude the wretched inquiſitorial ſcene, by ſtating ſome antiquated precedent, equally as abominable as that which is then acting, or giving ſome opinion of his own, and *falſely calling the one and the other—law.* It was, moſt probably, to ſuch a judge as this, that the moſt ſolemn

of all reproofs was given—*The lord will ſmite thee, thou whitened wall.*"

I now proceed to offer ſome remarks on what is called a ſpecial jury.—As to what is called a ſpecial verdict, I ſhall make no other remark upon it, than that it is in reality *not* a verdict. It is an attempt on the part of the jury to delegate, or of the bench to obtain, the exerciſe of that right, which is committed to the jury only.

With reſpect to ſpecial juries, I ſhall ſtate ſuch matters as I have been able to collect, for I do not find any uniform opinion concerning the mode of appointing them.

In the firſt place, the mode of trial is but of modern invention, and the origin of it, as I am told, is as follows:

Formerly, when diſputes aroſe between merchants, and were brought before a court, the caſe was that the nature of their commerce, and the method of keeping merc' ants accounts, not being ſufficiently underſtood by perſons out of their own line, it became neceſſary to depart from the common mode of appointing juries, whoſe *practical knowledge* would enable them to decide upon the caſe. From this introduction, ſpecial juries became more general; but ſome doubts having ariſen as to their legality, an act was paſſed in the 3d of George II. to eſtabliſh them as legal, and alſo to extend them to all caſes, not only between individuals, but in caſes where *the government itſelf ſhould be the proſecutor*. This moſt probably gave riſe to the ſuſpicion ſo generally entertained of packing a jury; becauſe by this act, when the crown, as it is called, is the proſecutor, the maſter of the crown-office, who holds his office under the crown, is the perſon who either wholly nominates, or has great power in nominating the jury, and therefore it has greatly the appearance of the proſecuting party ſelecting a jury.

The proceſs is as follows:

On motion being made in court, by either the plaintiff or defendant, for a ſpecial jury, the court grants it or not, at its own diſcretion.

If it be granted, the ſolicitor of the party that applied for the ſpecial jury, gives notice to the ſolicitor of the adverſe party, and a day and hour are appointed for them to meet at the office of the maſter of the crown-office. The maſter of the crown-office ſends to the ſheriff or his deputy, who attends with the ſheriff's book of freeholders. Forty-eight names are *taken*, and a copy thereof given to each of the parties; and on a future day, notice is again given, and the ſolicitors meet a ſecond time, and each ſtrikes out twelve names. The

liſt being thus reduced from forty-eight to twenty-four, the firſt twelve that appear in court, and anſwer to their names, is the ſpecial jury for that cauſe. The firſt operation, that of taking the forty-eight names, is called nominating the jury; and the reducing them to twenty-four is called ſtriking the jury.

Having thus ſtated the general proceſs, I come to particulars; and the firſt queſtion will be, how are the forty-eight names, out of which the jury is to be ſtruck, obtained from the ſheriff's book? For herein lies the principal ground of ſuſpicion, with reſpect to what is underſtood by packing of juries.

Either they muſt be taken by ſome rule agreed upon between the parties, or by ſome common rule known and eſtabliſhed beforehand, or at the diſcretion of ſome perſon, who, in ſuch a caſe, ought to be perfectly diſintereſted in the iſſue, as well officially as otherwiſe.

In the caſe of merchants, and in all caſes between individuals, the maſter of the office, called the crown-office, is officially an indifferent perſon, and as ſuch may be a proper perſon to act between the parties, and preſent them with a liſt of forty-eight names, out of which each party is to ſtrike twelve. But the caſe aſſumes an entire different character, when the government itſelf is the proſecutor. The maſter of the crown office is then an officer holding his office under the proſecutor; and it is therefore no wonder, that the ſuſpicion of packing juries ſhould, in ſuch caſes, have been ſo prevalent.

This will apply with additional force, when the proſecution is commenced againſt the author or publiſher of ſuch works as treat of reforms, and of the abolition of ſuperfluous places and offices, &c. becauſe in ſuch caſes every perſon holding an office, ſubject to that ſuſpicion, becomes intereſted as a party; and the office, called the crown-office, may, upon examination, be found to be of this deſcription.

I have heard it aſſerted, that the maſter of the crown office is to open the ſheriff's book as it were per hazard, and take thereout forty-eight *following* names, to which the word merchant or eſquire is affixed. The former of theſe are certainly proper, when the caſe is between merchants, and has reference to the origin of the cuſtom, and to nothing elſe. As to the word eſquire, every man is an eſquire who pleaſes to call himſelf eſquire; and the ſenſible part of mankind are leaving it off. But the matter for enquiry is, whether there be any exiſting law to direct the mode by which the forty-eight names ſhall be taken, or whether the mode be merely that of cuſtom which the office has created; or whether the ſelection of the forty-eight be

wholly at the diſcretion and choice of the maſter of the crown-office? One or other of the two latter appears to be the caſe, becauſe the act already mentioned, of the 3d of George II. lays down no rule or mode, nor refers to any preceding law—but ſays only, that ſpecial juries ſhall hereafter be ſtruck, "*in ſuch manner as ſpecial juries have been and are uſually ſtruck.*"

This act appears to me to have been what is generally underſtood by a "*deep take in.*" It was fitted to the ſpur of the moment in which it was paſſed, 3d of George II. when parties ran high, and it ſerved to throw into the hands of Walpole, who was then miniſter, the management of juries in crown proſecutions, by making the nomination of the forty-eight perſons, from whom the jury was to be ſtruck, follow the precedent eſtabliſhed by cuſtom between individuals, and by this means it ſlipt into practice with leſs ſuſpicion. Now, the manner of obtaining ſpecial juries through the medium of an officer of the government, ſuch, for inſtance, as a maſter of the crown-office, may be impartial in the caſe of merchants, or other individuals, but it becomes highly improper and ſuſpicious in caſes where the government itſelf is one of the parties. And it muſt, upon the whole, appear a ſtrange inconſiſtency, that a government ſhould keep one officer to nominate the forty-eight perſons from whom the jury is to be ſtruck, both of whom are *officers of the civil liſt*, and yet continue to call this by the pompous name of *the glorious right of trial by jury!*

In the caſe of the king againſt Jordan, for publiſhing RIGHTS OF MAN, the attorney general moved for the appointment of a ſpecial jury, and the maſter of the crown office nominated the forty-eight perſons himſelf, and took them from ſuch part of the ſheriff's book as he pleaſed. The trial did not come on, occaſioned by Jordan withdrawing his plea; but if it had, it might have afforded an opportunity of diſcuſſing the ſubject of ſpecial juries; for though ſuch diſcuſſion might have had no effect in the court of king's bench it would, in the preſent diſpoſition for enquiry, have had a conſiderable effect upon the country; and in all national reforms, this is the proper point to begin at. Put a country right, and it will ſoon put government right. Among the improper things acted by the government in the caſe of ſpecial juries, on their own motion, one has been that of treating the jury with a dinner, and afterwards giving each juryman two guineas, if a verdict be found for the proſecution, and only one if otherwiſe; and it has been long obſerved, that in London and Weſtminſter there are perſons who appear to make a trade of ſerving, by being ſo frequently ſeen upon ſpecial juries.

Thus much for ſpecial juries. As to what is called a *common jury*, upon any government proſecution againſt the author or publiſher of RIGHTS OF MAN, during the time of the *preſent ſheriffry*, I have one queſtion to offer, which is, *whether the preſent ſheriffs of London, having publicly prejudged the caſe, by the part they have taken in procuring an addreſs from the county of Middleſex (however diminutive and inſignificant the number of addreſſers were, being only one hundred and eighteen) are eligible or proper perſons to be intruſted with the power of returning a jury to try the iſſue of any ſuch proſecution.*

But the whole matter appears, at leaſt to me, to be worthy of a more extenſive conſideration than what relates to any jury, whether ſpecial or common; for the caſe is, whether any part of a whole nation, locally ſelected as a jury of twelve men always is, be competent to judge and determine for the whole nation, on any matter that relates to ſyſtems and principles of government, and whether it be not applying the inſtitution of juries to purpoſes for which ſuch inſtitution was not intended? For example,

I have aſſerted, in the work RIGHTS OF MAN, that as every man in the nation pays taxes, ſo has every man a right to a ſhare in government, and conſequently that the people of Mancheſter, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Halifax, &c. &c. have the ſame right as thoſe of London. Shall then twelve men, picked out between Temple-bar and Whitechapel, becauſe the book happened to be firſt publiſhed there, decide upon the rights of the inhabitants of thoſe towns, or of any other town or village in the nation.

Having thus ſpoken of juries, I come next to offer a few obſervations on the matter contained in the information or proſecution.

The work, RIGHTS OF MAN, conſiſts of part the firſt, and part the ſecond. The firſt part the proſecutor has thought it moſt proper to let alone; and from the ſecond part he has ſelected a few ſhort paragraphs, making in the whole not quite two pages of the ſame printing as in the cheap edition. Thoſe paragraphs relate chiefly to certain facts, ſuch as the revolution of 1688, and the coming of George the firſt, commonly called of the houſe of Hanover, or the houſe of Brunſwick, or ſome ſuch houſe. The arguments, plans and principles contained in the work, the proſecutor has not ventured to attack. They are beyond his reach.

The act which the proſecutor appears to reſt moſt upon for the ſupport of the proſecution, is the act, entitled, "An act, declaring the "rights and liberties of the ſubject and ſettling the ſucceſſion of the

"crown," paſſed in the firſt year of William and Mary, and more commonly known by the name of the "bill of rights."

I have called this bill "*A bill of wrongs and of inſult.*" My reaſons, and alſo my proofs, are as follow:

The method and principle which this bill takes for declaring rights and liberties, are in direct contradiction to rights and liberties; it is an aſſumed attempt to take them wholly away from poſterity—for the declaration in the ſaid bill is as follows:

"The lords ſpiritual and temporal, and commons, do, in *the name* "*of all the people*, moſt humbly and faithfully *ſubmit themſelves, their* "*heirs, and poſterity for ever;*" that is, to William and Mary his wife, their heirs and ſucceſſors. This is a ſtrange way of declaring rights and liberties. But the parliament who made this declaration in the name, and on the part of the people, had no authority from them for ſo doing—and with reſpect to *poſterity for ever*, they had no right or authority whatever in the caſe. It was aſſumption and uſurpation. I have reaſoned very extenſively againſt the principle of this bill, in the firſt part of Rights of Man; the proſecutor has ſilently admitted that reaſoning, and he now commences a proſecution on the authority of the bill, after admitting the reaſoning againſt it.

It is alſo to be obſerved, that the declaration in this bill, abject and irrational as it is, had no other intentional operation than againſt the family of the Stuarts, and their abettors. The idea did not then exiſt, that in the ſpace of an hundred years, poſterity might diſcover a different and much better ſyſtem of government, and that every ſpecies of hereditary government might fall as popes and monks had fallen before. This, I ſay, was not then thought of, and therefore the application of the bill, in the preſent caſe, is a new, erroneous, and illegal application, and is the ſame as creating a new bill *ex poſt facto*.

It has ever been the craft of courtiers, for the purpoſe of keeping up an expenſive and enormous civil liſt, and a mummery of uſeleſs and antiquated places and offices at the public expence, to be continually hanging England upon ſome individual or other, called *king*, though the man might not have capacity to be a pariſh conſtable. The folly and abſurdity of this, is appearing more and more every day; and ſtill thoſe men continue to act as if no alteration in the public opinion had taken place. They hear each other's nonſenſe, and ſuppoſe the whole nation talks the ſame gibberiſh.

Let ſuch men cry up the houſe of Orange, or the houſe of Brunſwick, if they pleaſe. They would cry up any other houſe if it ſuited

their purpoſe, and give as good reaſons for it. But what is this houſe, or that houſe, or any other houſe to a nation? "*For a nation to be free, it is ſufficient that ſhe wills it.*" Her freedom depends wholly upon herſelf, and not on any houſe, nor on any individual. I aſk not in what light this cargo of foreign houſes appears to others, but I will ſay in what light it appears to me.—It was like the trees of the foreſt, ſaying unto the bramble, come thou and reign over us.

Thus much for both their houſes. I now come to ſpeak of two other houſes, which are alſo put into the information, and thoſe are the houſe of lords, and the houſe of commons. Here, I ſuppoſe, the attorney-general intends to prove me guilty of ſpeaking either truth or falſhood; for, according to the modern interpretation of libels, it does not ſignify which, and the only improvement neceſſary to ſhew the complete abſurdity of ſuch doctrine, would be, to proſecute a man for uttering a moſt *falſe and wicked truth.*

I will quote the part I am going to give, from the office copy, with the attorney-general's innuendoes, encloſed in parentheſes, as they ſtand in the information, and I hope that civil liſt officer will caution the court not to laugh when he reads them, and alſo to take care not to laugh himſelf.

The information ſtates, That *Thomas Paine, being a wicked, malicious, ſeditious, and evil diſpoſed perſon, hath, with force and arms, and moſt wicked cunning, written and publiſhed a certain falſe, ſcandalous, malicious, and ſeditious libel; in one part thereof, to the tenor and effect following, that is to ſay*—

"With reſpect to the two houſes, of which the Engliſh parliament *(meaning the parliament of this kingdom)* is compoſed, they appear to be effectually influenced into one, and, as a legiſlature, to have no temper of its own. The miniſter *(meaning the miniſter employed by the king of this realm, in the adminiſtration of the government thereof)* whoever he, at any time may be, touches IT *(meaning the two houſes of parliament of this kingdom)* as with an opium wand, and IT *(meaning the two houſes of parliament of this kingdom)* ſleeps obedience.—As I am not malicious enough to diſturb their repoſe, though it be time they ſhould awake, I leave the two houſes and the attorney general, to the enjoyment of their dreams, and proceed to a new ſubject.

The gentlemen, to whom I ſhall next addreſs myſelf, are thoſe who have ſtyled themſelves "*friends of the people,*" holding their meeting at the freemaſon's tavern, London.

One of the principal members of this ſociety, is Mr. Grey, who,

I believe, is alſo one of the moſt independent members in parliament. I collect this opinion from what Mr. Burke formerly mentioned to me, rather than from any knowledge of my own. The occaſion was as follows:

I was in England at the time the bubble broke forth about Nootka Sound; and the day after the king's meſſage, as it is called, was ſent to parliament; I wrote a note to Mr. Burke, that upon the condition the French revolution ſhould not be a ſubject (for he was then writing the book I have ſince anſwered) I would call on him the next day, and mention ſome matters I was acquainted with, reſpecting the affair; for it appeared to me extraordinary, that any body of men, calling themſelves repreſentatives, ſhould commit themſelves ſo precipitately, or, "ſleep obedience," as parliament was then doing, and run a nation into expence, and, perhaps a war, without ſo much as enquiring into the caſe, or the ſubject, of both which I had ſome knowledge.

When I ſaw Mr. Burke, and mentioned the circumſtances to him, he particularly ſpoke of Mr. Grey, as the fitteſt member to bring ſuch matters forward; for, ſaid Mr. Burke, "*I am not the proper* perſon to do it, as I am in a treaty with Mr. Pitt about Mr. Haſtings's trial." I hope the attorney-general will allow, that Mr. Burke was then *ſleeping his obedience*.—But to return to the ſociety—

I cannot bring myſelf to believe, that the general motive of this ſociety is any thing more than that by which every former parliamentary oppoſition has been governed, and by which the preſent is ſufficiently known. Failing in their purſuit of power and place within doors, they have now (and that not in a very mannerly manner) endeavoured to poſſeſs themſelves of that ground out of doors, which, had it not been made by others, would not have been made by them. They appear to me to have watched, with more cunning than candor, the progreſs of a certain publication, and when they ſaw it had excited a ſpirit of enquiry, and was rapidly ſpreading, they ſtepped forward to profit by the opportunity, and Mr. Fox *then* called it a libel. In ſaying this, he libelled himſelf. Politicians of this caſt, ſuch, I mean, as thoſe who trim between parties, and lie by for events, are to be found in every country, and it never yet happened that they did not do more harm than good. They embarraſs buſineſs, fritter it to nothing, perplex the people, and the event to themſelves generally is, that they go juſt far enough to make enemies of the few, without going far enough to make friends of the many.

Whoever will read the declarations of this ſociety, of the 25th of

April, and 5th of May, will find a ſtudied reſerve upon all the points that are real abuſes. They ſpeak not once of the extravagance of government, of the abominable liſt of unneceſſary and ſinecure places and penſions, of the enormity of the civil liſt of the exceſs of taxes, nor of any one matter that ſubſtantially affects the nation; and from ſome converſation that has paſſed in that ſociety, it does not appear to me that it is any part of their plan, to carry this claſs of reforms into practice. No oppoſition party ever did, when it gained poſſeſſion.

In making theſe free obſervations, I mean not to enter into contention with this ſociety, their incivility towards me is what I ſhould expect from place-hunting reformers. They are welcome, however, to the ground they have advanced upon, and I wiſh that every individual among them may act in the ſame upright, uninfluenced, and public ſpirited manner that I have done. Whatever reforms may be obtained, and by whatever means, they will be for the benefit of others, and not of me. I have no other intereſt in the cauſe than the intereſt of my heart. The part I have acted has been wholly that of a volunteer, unconnected with party; and when I quit, it ſhall be as honourably as I began.

I conſider the reform of parliament, by an application to parliament, as propoſed by the ſociety, to be a worn-out hackney ſubject, about which the nation is tired, and the parties are deceiving each other. It is not a ſubject that is cognizable before parliament, becauſe no government has a right to alter itſelf, either in whole or in part. The right, and the exerciſe of that right, appertains to the nation only, and the proper mean is by a national convention, elected for the purpoſe, by all the people. By this, the will of the nation whether to reform or not, or what the reform ſhall be, or how far it ſhall extend, will be known, and it cannot be known by any other means. Partial addreſſes, or ſeparate aſſociations, are not teſtimonies of the general will.

It is, however, certain, that the opinions of men, with reſpect to ſyſtems and principles of government, are changing faſt in all countries. The alteration in England, within the ſpace of little more than a year, is far greater than could have been believed, and it is daily and hourly increaſing. It moves along the country with the ſilence of thought. The enormous expence of government has provoked men to think, by making them feel; and the proclamation has ſerved to increaſe jealouſy and diſguſt. To prevent, therefore, thoſe commotions which too often and too ſuddenly ariſe from ſuffocated diſcontents,

it is beſt that the general WILL ſhould have the full and free opportunity of b ing publicly aſcertained and known.

Wretched as the ſtate of repreſentation is in England, it is every day becoming worſe, becauſe the unrepreſented parts of the nation are increaſing in population and property, and the repreſented parts are decreaſing. It is, therefore, no-ill grounded eſtimation to ſay, that as not one perſon in ſeven is repreſented, at leaſt fourteen millions of taxes, out of the ſeventeen millions, are paid by the unrepreſented part; for although copyholds and leaſeholds are aſſeſſed to the land tax, the holders are unrepreſented. Should then a general demur take place as to the obligation of paying taxes, on the ground of not being repreſented, it is not the repreſentatives of rotten boroughs, nor ſpecial juries, that can decide the queſtion. This is one of the poſſible caſes that ought to be foreſeen, in order to prevent the inconveniences that might ariſe to numerous individuals, by provoking it.

I confeſs I have no idea of petitioning for rights. Whatever the rights of people are, they have a right to them, and none have a right either to withhold them, or to grant them. Government ought to be eſtabliſhed on ſuch principles of juſtice as to exclude the occaſion of all ſuch applications; for wherever they appear, they are virtually accuſations.

I wiſh that Mr. Grey, ſince he has embarked in the buſineſs, would take the whole of it into conſideration. He will then ſee, that the right of reforming the ſtate of the repreſentation does not reſide in parliament, and that the only motion he could conſiſtently make would be, that parliament ſhould *recommend* the election of a convention by all the people, becauſe all pay taxes. But whether parliament recommended it or not, the right of the nation would neither be leſſened nor increaſed thereby.

As to petitions from the unrepreſented part, they ought not to be looked for. As well might it be expected that Mancheſter, Sheffield, &c. ſhould petition the rotten boroughs, as that they ſhould petition the repreſentatives of thoſe boroughs. Thoſe two towns alone pay far more taxes than all the rotten boroughs put together, and it is ſcarcely to be expected they ſhould pay their court either to the boroughs, or the borough-mongers.

It ought alſo to be obſerved, that what is called parliament, is compoſed of two houſes that have always declared againſt the right of each other to interfere in any matter that related to the circumſtances of either, particularly that of election. A reform, therefore

in the repreſentation, cannot, on the ground they have individually taken, become the ſubject of an act of parliament, becauſe ſuch a mode would include the interference, againſt which the commons on their part have proteſted; but muſt, as well on the ground of formality, as on that of right, proceed from a national convention.

Let Mr. Grey, or any other man, ſit down and endeavour to put his thoughts together, for the purpoſe of drawing up an application to parliament for a reform of parliament, and he will ſoon convince himſelf of the folly of the attempt. He will find that he cannot get on; that he cannot make his thoughts join, ſo as to produce any effect; for whatever formality of words he may uſe, they will unavoidably include two ideas directly oppoſed to each other; the one in ſetting forth the reaſons, the other in praying for the relief, and the two when placed together, would ſtand thus: "*The repreſentation in parliament is ſo very corrupt, that we can no longer confide in it,—and therefore, confiding in the juſtice and wiſdom of parliament, we pray,*" *&c. &c.*

The heavy manner in which every former propoſed application to parliament has dragged, ſufficiently ſhews, that though the nation might not exactly ſee the awkwardneſs of the meaſure, it could not clearly ſee its way, by that mean. To this alſo may be added another remark, which is, that the worſe parliament is, the leſs will be the inclination to petition it. This indifference, viewed as it ought to be, is one of the ſtrongeſt cenſures the public expreſs. It is as if they were to ſay, "Ye are not worth reforming."

Let any man examine the court-kalendar of placemen in both houſes, and the manner in which the civil liſt operates, and he will be at no loſs to account for this indifference and want of confidence on one ſide, nor of the oppoſition to reforms on the other.

Beſides the numerous liſt of paid perſons exhibited in the court-kalendar, which ſo indecently ſtares the nation in the face, there is an unknown number of maſked penſioners, which renders parliament ſtill more ſuſpected.

Who would have ſuppoſed that Mr. Burke, holding forth as he formerly did againſt ſecret influence, and corrupt majorities, ſhould become a concealed penſioner? I will now ſtate the caſe, not for the little purpoſe of expoſing Mr. Burke, but to ſhew the inconſiſtency of any application to a body of men, more than half of whom, as far as the nation can at preſent know, may be in the ſame caſe with himſelf.

Towards the end of lord North's adminiſtration, Mr. Burke brought a bill into parliament, generally known by the name of Mr.

Burke's reform bill; in which, among other things, it is enacted, "That no penſion, exceeding the ſum of three hundred pounds a year, ſhall be granted to any one perſon, and that the whole amount of the penſions granted in one year ſhall not exceed ſix hundred pounds; a liſt of which, "together with the *names of the perſons* to whom the ſame are granted, ſhall be laid before parliament in twenty days after the beginning of each ſeſſion, until the whole penſion liſt ſhall be reduced to ninety thouſand pounds." A proviſory clauſe is afterwards added, "That it ſhall be lawful for the firſt commiſſioner of the treaſury, to return into the exchequer, any penſion or annuity, *without a name*, on his making oath that ſuch penſion or annuity is not directly or indirectly for the benefit, uſe, or behoof of any member of the houſe of commons."

But ſoon after that adminiſtration ended, and the party Mr. Burke acted with, came into power, it appears from the circumſtances I am going to relate, that Mr. Burke became himſelf a penſioner in diſguiſe; in a ſimilar manner, as if a penſion had been granted in the name of John Nokes, to be privately paid to and enjoyed by Tom Stiles. The name of Edmund Burke does not appear in the original tranſaction: But after the penſion was obtained, Mr. Burke wanted to make the moſt of it at once, by ſelling or mortgaging it; and the gentlemen, in whoſe name the penſion ſtands, applied to one of the public offices for that purpoſe. This unfortunately brought forth the name of *Edmund Burke*, as the real penſioner of £.1,500 per annum. When men trumpet forth what they call the bleſſings of the conſtitution, it ought to be known what ſort of bleſſings they allude to.

As to the civil liſt, of a million a year, it is not to be ſuppoſed that any one man can eat, drink, or conſume the whole upon himſelf. The caſe is, that above half this ſum is annually apportioned among courtiers, and court members of both houſes, in places and offices, altogether inſignificant and perfectly uſeleſs, as to every purpoſe of civil, rational, and manly government. For inſtance,

Of what uſe in the ſcience and ſyſtem of government, is what is called a lord chamberlain, a maſter and a miſtreſs of the robes, a maſter of the horſe, a maſter of the hawks, and an hundred other ſuch things? Laws derive no additional force, nor additional excellence from ſuch mummery.

In the diſburſements of the civil liſt for the year 1786 (which may be ſeen in ſir John St. Clair's Hiſtory of the Revenue) are four ſeparate charges for this mummery office of chamberlain:

1ſt.	£.38,778	17	—
2d.	3,000	—	—
3d.	24,069	19	—
4th.	10,000	18	3
	£.75,849	14	3

Beſides £.1,119 charged for alms.

From this ſample, the reſt may be gueſſed at. As to the maſter of the hawks (there are no hawks kept, and if there were, it is no reaſon the people ſhould pay the expence of feeding them, many of whom are put to it to get bread for their children) his ſalary is £.1,372 10.

And beſides a liſt of items of this kind, ſufficient to fill a quire of paper, the penſion liſts alone are £.107,404 13 4, which is a greater ſum than all the expences of the federal government in America amount to.

Among the items, there are two I had no expectations of finding, and which, in this day of enquiry after civil liſt influence, ought to be expoſed. The one is an annual payment of one thouſand ſeven hundred pounds to the diſſenting miniſters in England, and the other, eight hundred pounds to thoſe in Ireland.

This is the fact; and the diſtribution, *as I am informed*, is as follows: The whole ſum of £.1,700 is paid to one perſon, a diſſenting miniſter in London, who divides it among eight others; and thoſe eight among ſuch others as they pleaſe. The lay-body of the diſſenters, and many of their principal miniſters, have long conſidered it as diſhonourable, and have endeavoured to prevent it, but ſtill it continues to be ſecretly paid; and as the world has ſometimes ſeen very fulſome addreſſes from parts of that body, it may naturally be ſuppoſed that the receivers, like biſhops and other court-clergy, are not idle in promoting them. How the money is diſtributed in Ireland, I know not.

To recount all the ſecret hiſtory of the civil liſt, is not the intention of this publication. It is ſufficient in this place, to expoſe its general character, and the maſs of influence it keeps alive. It will neceſſarily become one of the objects of reform; and therefore enough is ſaid to ſhew, that under its operation, no application to parliament can be expected to ſucceed, nor can conſiſtently be made.

Such reforms will not be promoted by the party that is in poſſeſſion of thoſe places, nor by the oppoſition who are waiting for them; and as to a *mere reform* in the ſtate of the repreſentation, under the

idea that another parliament, differently elected to the present, but still a component third part of the same system, and subject to the control of the other two parts, will abolish those abuses, is altogether delusion; because it is not only impracticable on the ground of formality, but is unwisely exposing another set of men to the same corruptions that have tainted the present.

Were all the objects that require a reform accomplishable by a mere reform in the state of representation, the persons who compose the present parliament might, with rather more propriety, be asked to abolish all the abuses themselves, than be applied to as the mere instruments of doing it by a future parliament. If the virtue be wanting to abolish the abuse, it is also wanting to act as the means, and the nation must, of necessity, proceed by some other plan.

Having thus endeavoured to shew what the abject condition of parliament is, and the impropriety of going a second time over the same ground that has before miscarried, I come to the remaining part of the subject.

There ought to be, in the constitution of every country, a mode of referring back, on any extraordinary occasion, to the sovereign and original constituent power, which is the nation itself. The right of altering any part of a government cannot, as already observed, reside in the government, or that government might make itself what it pleased.

It ought also to be taken for granted, that though a nation may feel inconveniences, either in the excess of taxation, or in the mode of expenditure, or in any thing else, it may not at first be sufficiently assured in what part of its government the defect lies, or where the evil originates. It may be supposed to be in one part, and on enquiry be found to be in another; or partly in all. This obscurity is naturally interwoven with what are called mixed governments.

Be, however, the reform to be accomplished whatever it may, it can only follow in consequence of first obtaining a full knowledge of all the causes that have rendered such reform necessary, and every thing short of this, is guess-work or frivolous cunning. In this case, it cannot be supposed that any application to parliament can bring forward this knowledge. The body is itself the supposed cause, or one of the supposed causes, of the abuses in question; and cannot be expected, and ought not to be asked, to give evidence against itself. The enquiry therefore, which is of necessity the first step in the business, cannot be trusted to parliament, but must be undertaken by a

distinct body of men, separated from every suspicion of corruption or influence.

Instead, then, of referring to rotten boroughs and absurd corporations for addresses, or hawking them about the country to be signed by a few dependant tenants, the real and effectual mode would be to come at once to the point, and to ascertain the sense of the nation by electing a national convention. By this method, as already observed, the general WILL, whether to reform or not, or what the reform shall be, or how far it shall extend, will be known, and it cannot be known by any other means. Such a body, empowered and supported by the nation, will have authority to demand information upon all matters necessary to be enquired into; and no minister, nor any other person, will dare to refuse it. It will then be seen whether seventeen millions of taxes are necessary, and for what purposes they are expended. The concealed pensioners will then be obliged to unmask; and the source of influence and corruption, if any such there be, will be laid open to the nation, not for the purpose of revenge, but of redress.

By taking this public and national ground, all objections against partial addresses on the one side, or private associations on the other, will be done away, THE NATION WILL DECREE ITS OWN REFORMS; and the clamour about party and faction, or ins or outs, will become ridiculous.

The plan and organization of a convention is easy in practice.

In the first place, the number of inhabitants in every county can be sufficiently enough known, from the number of houses assessed to the house and window-light tax in each county. This will give the rule for apportioning the number of members to be elected to the national convention in each of the counties.

If the total number of inhabitants in England be seven millions, and the total number of members to be elected to the convention be one thousand, the number of members to be elected in a county, containing one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, will be *twenty-one*, and in like proportion for any other county.

As the election of a convention must, in order to ascertain the general sense of the nation, go on grounds different from that of parliamentary elections, the mode that best promises this end will have no difficulties to combat with from absurd customs and pretended rights. The right of every man will be the same, whether he lives in a city, a town, or a village. The custom of attaching rights to *place*, or in other words to inanimate matter, instead of to

the *perſon*, independently of place, is too abſurd to make any part of a rational argument.

As every man in the nation, of the age of twenty-one years, pays taxes, either out of the property he poſſeſſes, or out of the product of his labour, which is property to him; and is amenable in his own perſon to every law of the land; ſo has every one the ſame equal right to vote, and no one part of a nation, nor any individual, has a right to diſpute the right of another. The man who ſhould do this, ought to forfeit the exerciſe of his *own* right for a term of years. This would render the puniſhment conſiſtent with the crime.

When a qualification to vote is regulated by years, it is placed on the firmeſt poſſible ground; becauſe the qualification is ſuch, as nothing but dying before the time can take away; and the equality of rights, as a principle, is recognized in the act of regulating the exerciſe. But when rights are placed upon, or made dependant upon property, they are on the moſt precarious of all tenures, "Riches make themſelves wings, and fly away," and the rights fly with them; and thus they become loſt to the man when they would be of moſt value.

It is from a ſtrange mixture of tyranny and cowardice, that excluſions have been ſet up and continued. The boldneſs to do wrong at firſt, changes afterwards into cowardly craft, and at laſt into fear. The repreſentatives in England appear now to act as if they were afraid to do right, even in part, leſt it ſhould awaken the nation to a ſenſe of all the wrongs it has endured. This caſe ſerves to ſhew, that the ſame conduct that beſt conſtitutes the ſafety of an individual, namely, a ſtrict adherence to principle, conſtitutes alſo the ſafety of a government, and that without it ſafety is but an empty name. When the rich plunder the poor of his rights, it becomes an example to the poor to plunder the rich of his property; for the rights of the one are as much property to him, as wealth is property to the other, and the *little all* is as dear as the *much*. It is only by ſetting out on juſt principles that men are trained to be juſt to each other; and it will always be found, that when the rich protect the rights of the poor, the poor will protect the property of the rich. But the guarantee, to be effectual, muſt be parliamentarily reciprocal.

Excluſions are not only unjuſt, but they frequently operate as injuriouſly to the party who monopolizes, as to thoſe who are excluded. When men ſeek to exclude others from participating in the exerciſe of any right, they ſhould, at leaſt, be aſſured, that they can effectually perform the whole of the buſineſs they undertake; for unleſs

they do this, themſelves will be loſers by the monopoly. This has been the caſe with reſpect to the monopolized right of election. The monopolizing party has not been able to keep the parliamentary repreſentation, to whom the power of taxation was entruſted, in the ſtate it ought to have been, and have thereby multiplied taxes upon themſelves equally with thoſe who were excluded.

A great deal has been, and will continue to be ſaid, about diſqualifications, ariſing from the commiſſion of offences; but were this ſubject urged to its full extent, it would diſqualify a great nnmber of the preſent electors, together with their repreſentatives; for, of all offences, none are more deſtructive to the morals of ſociety than bribery and corruption. It is, therefore, civility to ſuch perſons to paſs this ſubject over, and to give them a fair opportunity of recovering, or rather of creating character.

Every thing, in the preſent mode of electioneering in England, is the reverſe of what it ought to be, and the vulgarity that attends elections is no other than the natural conſequence of inverting the order of the ſyſtem.

In the firſt place, the candidate ſeeks the elector, inſtead of the elector ſeeking for a repreſentative; and the electors are advertiſed as being in the intereſt of the candidate, inſtead of the candidate being in the intereſt of the electors. The candidate pays the elector for his vote, inſtead of the nation paying the repreſentative for his time and attendance on public buſineſs. The complaint for an undue election is brought by the candidate; as if he, and not the electors, were the party aggrieved; and he takes on himſelf at any period of the election, to break it up, by declining, as if the election was in his right and not in theirs.

The compact that was entered into at the laſt Weſtminſter election between two of the candidates (Mr. Fox and lord Hood) was an indecent violation of the principles of election. The candidates, aſſumed, in their own perſons, the rights of the electors; for it was only in the body of the electors, and not at all in the candidates, that the right of making any ſuch compact or compromiſe could exiſt. But the principle of election and repreſentation is ſo completely done away, in every ſtage thereof, that inconſiſtency has no longer the power of ſurpriſing.

Neither from elections thus conducted, nor from rotten borough addreſſers, nor from county meetings, promoted by placemen and penſioners, can the ſenſe of the nation be known. It is ſtill corruption appealing to itſelf. But a convention of a thouſand

perſons, fairly elected, would bring every matter to a decided iſſue.

As to county meetings, it is only perſons of leiſure, or thoſe who live near to the place of meeting, that can attend, and the number on ſuch occaſions is but like a drop in the bucket compared with the whole. The only conſiſtent ſervice which ſuch meetings could render, would be that of apportioning the county into convenient diſtricts, and when this is done, each diſtrict might, according to its number of inhabitants, elect its quota of county members to the national convention; and the vote of each elector might be taken in the pariſh where he reſided, either by ballot or by voice, as he ſhould chooſe to give it.

A national convention thus formed, would bring together the ſenſe and opinions of every part of the nation, fairly taken. The ſcience of government, and the intereſt of the public, and of the ſeveral parts thereof would then, undergo an ample and rational diſcuſſion, freed from the language of parliamentary diguiſe.

But in all deliberations of this kind, though men have a right to reaſon with, and endeavour to convince each other, upon any matter that reſpects their common good, yet, in point of practice, the majority of opinions, when known, forms a rule for the whole, and to this rule every good citizen practically conforms.

Mr. Burke, as if he knew (for every concealed penſioner has the opportunity of knowing) that the abuſes acted under the preſent ſyſtem, are too flagrant to be palliated, and that the majority of opinions, whenever ſuch abuſes ſhould be made public, would be for a general and effectual reform, has endeavoured to preclude the event, by ſturdily denying the right of a majority of a nation to act as a whole. Let us beſtow a thought upon this caſe.

When any matter is propoſed as a ſubject for conſultation, it neceſſarily implies ſome mode of deciſion. Common conſent, ariſing from abſolute neceſſity, has placed this in a majority of opinions; becauſe without it there can be no deciſion, and conſequently no order. It is perhaps the only caſe in which mankind, however various in their ideas upon other matters, can conſiſtently be unanimous; becauſe it is a mode of deciſion derived from the primary original right of every individual concerned; *that* right being firſt individually exerciſed in giving an opinion, and whether that opinion ſhall arrange with the minority or the majority, is a ſubſequent accidental thing that neither increaſes nor diminiſhes the individual original right itſelf. Prior to any debate, enquiry or inveſtigation, it

is not ſuppoſed to be known on which ſide the majority of opinions will fall, and therefore whilſt this mode of deciſion ſecures to every one the right of giving an opinion, it admits to every one an equal chance in the ultimate event.

Among the matters that will preſent themſelves to the conſideration of a national convention, there is one, wholly of a domeſtic nature, but ſo marvelloufly loaded with confuſion, as to appear at firſt ſight, almoſt impoſſible to be reformed. I mean the condition of what is called aw.

But, if we examine into the cauſe from whence this confuſion, now ſo much the ſubject of univerſal complaint, is produced, not only the remedy will immediately preſent itſelf, but with it, the means of preventing the like caſe hereafter.

In the firſt place, the confuſion has generated itſelf from the abſurdity of every parliament aſſuming to be eternal in power, and the laws partake in a ſimilar manner of this aſſumption. They have no period of legal or natural expiration; and, however abſurd in principle, or inconſiſtent in practice, many of them have become, they ſtill are, if not eſpecially repealed, conſidered as making a part of the general maſs. By this means the body of what is called law, is ſpread over a ſpace of *ſeveral hundred years*, comprehending laws obſolete, laws repugnant, laws ridiculous, and every other kind of laws forgotten or remembered; and what renders the caſe ſtill worſe is, that the confuſion multiplies with the progreſs of time.*

To bring this miſhapen monſter into form, and to prevent its lapſing again into a wilderneſs ſtate, only two things, and thoſe very ſimple, are neceſſary.

The firſt is, to review the whole maſs of laws, and to bring forw rd ſuch only as are worth retaining, and let all the reſt drop; and to give to the laws ſo brought forward a new era, commencing from the time of ſuch reform.

Secondly, that at the expiration of every twenty-one years (or any other ſtated period) a like review ſhall again be taken, and the laws, found proper to be retained, be again carried forward, commencing with that date, and the uſeleſs laws dropt and diſcontinued.

By this means there can be no obſolete laws, and ſcarcely ſuch a

* *In the time of Henry the fourth, a law was paſſed, making it felony "to multiply gold or ſilver, or to make uſe of the craft or multiplication," and this law remained two hundred and eighty-five years upon the ſtatute books. It was then repealed as being ridiculous and injurious.*

thing as laws ſtanding in direct or equivocal contradiction to each other, and every perſon will know the period of time to which he is to look back for all the laws in being.

It is worth remarking that whilſt every other branch of ſcience is brought within ſome commodious ſyſtem, and the ſtudy of it ſimpliſied by eaſy methods, the laws take the contrary courſe, and become every year more complicated, entangled, confuſed, and obſcure.

Among the paragraphs which the attorney-general has taken from the *Rights of Man*, and put into his information, one is, that where I have ſaid, "that with reſpect to regular law, there is *ſcarcely ſuch a thing*."

As I do not know whether the attorney-general means to ſhew this expreſſion to be libellous, becauſe it is TRUE, or becauſe it is FALSE, I ſhall make no other reply to him in this place, than by remarking, that if almanac-makers had not been more judicious than law-makers, the ſtudy of almanacs would by this time have become as abſtruſe as the ſtudy of the law, and we ſhould hear of a library of almanacs as we now do of ſtatutes; but by the ſimple operation of letting the obſolete matter drop, and carrying forward that only which is proper to be retained, all that is neceſſary to be known, is found within the ſpace of a year, and laws alſo admit of being kept within ſome given period.

I ſhall here cloſe this letter, ſo far as it reſpects the addreſſers, the proclamation, and the proſecution; and ſhall offer a few obſervations to the ſociety, ſtyling itſelf "THE FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE."

That the ſcience of government is beginning to be better underſtood than in former times, and that the age of fiction and political ſuperſtition, and of craft and myſtery is paſſing away, are matters which the experience of every day proves to be true, as well in England as in other countries.

As therefore it is impoſſible to calculate the ſilent progreſs of opinion, and alſo impoſſible to govern a nation after it has changed its habits of thinking, by the craft or policy that it was governed by before, the only true method to prevent popular diſcontents and commotions is, to throw, by every fair and rational argument, all the light upon the ſubject that can poſſibly be thrown; and at the ſame time, to open the means of collecting the general ſenſe of the nation; and this cannot, as already obſerved, be done by any plan ſo effectually as a national convention. Here individual opinion will quiet itſelf by having a centre to reſt upon.

The ſociety already mentioned (which is made up of men of various deſcriptions, but chiefly of thoſe called Foxites) appears to me, either to have taken wrong grounds from want of judgment, or to have acted with cunning reſerve. It is now amuſing the people with a new phraſe, namely, that of "a temperate and moderate reform," the interpretation of which is, *a continuance of the abuſes as long as poſſible. If we cannot hold all let us hold ſom*.

Who are thoſe that are frightened at reforms? Are the public afraid that their taxes ſhould be leſſened too much? Are they afraid that ſinecure places and penſions ſhould be aboliſhed too faſt? Are the poor afraid that their condition ſhould be rendered too comfortable? Is the worn-out mechanic, or the aged and decayed tradeſman, frightened at the proſpect of receiving ten pounds a year out of the ſurplus taxes? Is the ſoldier frightened at the thoughts of his diſcharge, and three ſhillings per week during life? Is the ſailor afraid that preſs-warrants will be aboliſhed? The ſociety miſtakes the fears of borough-mongers, placemen and penſioners, for the fears of the people; and the *temperate and moderate reform* it talks of, is calculated to ſuit the condition of the former.

Thoſe words, "temperate and moderate," are words either of political cowardice, or of cunning, or ſeduction.—A thing, moderately good, is not ſo good as it ought to be. Moderation in temper, is always a virtue; but moderation in principle, is a ſpecies of vice. But who is to be the judge of what is a temperate and moderate reform? The ſociety is the repreſentative of nobody; neither can the unrepreſented part of the nation commit this power to thoſe in parliament, in whoſe election they had no choice; and therefore, even upon the ground the ſociety has taken, recourſe muſt be had to a national convention.

The objection which Mr. Fox made to Mr. Grey's propoſed motion for a parliamentary reform was, that it contained no plan.—It certainly did not. But the plan very eaſily preſents itſelf; and whilſt it is fair for all parties, it prevents the dangers that might otherwiſe ariſe from private or popular diſcontent.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO

LORD ONSLOW,

LORD LIEUTENANT OF THE COUNTY OF SURRY;

ON THE SUBJECT OF THE LATE EXCELLENT

PROCLAMATION:

OR, THE

CHAIRMAN

WHO SHALL PRESIDE AT THE MEETING TO BE HELD AT EPSOM, JUNE 18.

LONDON, JUNE 17, 1792.

I HAVE seen in the public newspapers the following advertisement, to wit—

"To the nobility, gentlemen, clergy, freeholders, and other inhabitants of the county of Surry.

"At the requisition and desire of several of the freeholders of the county, I am, in the absence of the Sheriff, to desire the favour of your attendance, at a meeting to be held at Epsom, on Monday the 18th instant, at 12 o'clock at noon, to consider of an humble address to his MAJESTY, to express our grateful approbation of his MAJESTY's paternal and well-timed attendance to the public welfare, in his late most gracious proclamation against the enemies of our happy constitution.

(Signed) "ONSLOW CRANLEY."

Taking it for granted, that the aforesaid advertisement, equally as obscure as the proclamation to which it refers, has nevertheless some meaning, and is intended to effect some purpose; and as prosecution (whether wisely or unwisely, justly or unjustly) is already commenced against a work entitled RIGHTS OF MAN, of which I have the the honour and happiness to be the author; I feel it necessary to address this letter to you, and to request that it may be read publicly to the gentlemen who shall meet at Epsom in consequence of the advertisement.

The work now under prosecution is, I conceive, the same work

which is intended to be ſuppreſſed by the aforeſaid proclamation.—Admitting this to be the caſe, the gentlemen of the county of Surry are called upon by ſomebody to condemn a work, and they are at the ſame time forbidden by the proclamation to know what that work is; and they are further called upon to give their aid and aſſiſtance to prevent other people from knowing it alſo.—It is therefore neceſſary that the author, for his own juſtification, as well as to prevent the gentlemen who ſhall meet from being impoſed upon by miſrepreſentation, ſhould give ſome outlines of the principles and plans which that work contains.

The work, ſir, in queſtion contains, firſt, an inveſtigation of general principles of government.

It alſo diſtinguiſhes government into two claſſes or ſyſtems, the one the hereditary ſyſtem—the other the repreſentative ſyſtem; and it compares theſe two ſyſtems with each other.

It ſhews, that what is called hereditary government cannot exiſt as a matter of right; becauſe hereditary government always means a government yet to come; and the caſe always is, that thoſe who are to live afterwards have always the ſame right to eſtabliſh a government for themſelves as the people who had lived before them.

It alſo ſhews the defect to which hereditary government is unavoidably ſubject: That it muſt, from the nature of it, throw government into the hands of men totally unworthy of it from the want of principle, or unfitted for it from want of capacity. JAMES the IId. and many others are recorded in the Engliſh hiſtory, as proofs of the former of thoſe caſes, and inſtances are to be found almoſt over Europe, to prove the truth of the latter.

It then ſhews that the repreſentative ſyſtem is the only true ſyſtem of government; that it is alſo the only ſyſtem under which the liberties of any people can be permanently ſecure; and further, that it is the only one that can continue the ſame equal probability at all times of admitting of none but men properly qualified, both by principles and abilities, into government, and of excluding ſuch as are otherwiſe.

The work ſhews alſo, by plans and calculations not hitherto denied nor controverted, not even by the proſecution that is commenced, that the taxes now exiſting may be reduced at leaſt ſix millions, that taxes may be entirely taken off from the poor, who are computed at one third of the nation; and that taxes on the other two thirds may be conſiderably reduced—that the aged poor may be comfortably provided for, and the children of poor families properly educated—that fifteen thouſand ſoldiers, and the ſame number of ſailors, may be diſ-

lowed three ſhillings per week during life out of the ſurplus taxes; and alſo that a proportionate allowance may be made to the officers, and the pay of the remaining ſoldiers and ſailors be increaſed; and that it is better to apply the ſurplus taxes to thoſe purpoſes than to conſume them upon lazy and profligate placemen and penſioners; and that the revenue, ſaid to be twenty thouſand pounds per annum, raiſed by a tax upon coals, and given to the duke of RICHMOND, is a groſs impoſition upon all the people of London, and ought to be inſtantly aboliſhed.

This, ſir, is a conciſe abſtract of the principles and plans contained in the work that is now proſecuted, and for the ſuppreſſion of which the proclamation appears to be intended; but as it is impoſſible that I can in the compaſs of a letter, bring into view all the matters contained in the work, and as it is proper that the gentlemen who may compoſe that meeting ſhould know what the merits or demerits of it are, before they come to any reſolutions, either directly or indirectly relating thereto, I requeſt the honour of preſenting them with one hundred copies of the ſecond part of the RIGHTS OF MAN, and alſo one thouſand copies of my letter to Mr. DUNDAS, which I have directed to be ſent to Epſom for that purpoſe; and I beg the favour of the chairman to take the trouble of preſenting them to the gentlemen who ſhall meet on that occaſion, with my ſincere wiſhes for their happineſs, and for that of the nation in general.

Having now cloſed thus much of the ſubject of my letter, I next come to ſpeak of what has relation to me perſonally. I am well aware of the delicacy that attends it, but the purpoſe of calling the meeting appears to me ſo inconſiſtent with that juſtice that is always due between man and man, that it is proper I ſhould (as well on account of the gentlemen who may meet, as on my own account) explain myſelf fully and candidly thereon.

I have already informed the gentlemen, that a proſecution is commenced againſt a work of which I have the honour and happineſs to be the author; and I have good reaſons for believing that the proclamation which the gentlemen are called to conſider, and to preſent an addreſs upon, is purpoſely calculated to give an impreſſion to the jury before whom that matter is to come. In ſhort, that it is dictating a verdict by proclamation; and I conſider the inſtigators of the meeting to be held at Epſom, as aiding and abetting the ſame improper, and, in my opinion, illegal purpoſe, and that in a manner very artfully contrived, as I ſhall now ſhew.

Had a meeting been called of the freeholders of the county of

Middlesex, the gentlemen who had composed that meeting would have rendered themselves objectionable as persons to serve on a jury before whom the judicial case was afterwards to come. But by calling a meeting out of the county of Middlesex, that matter is artfully avoided, and the gentlemen of Surry are summoned, as if it were intended thereby to give a tone to the sort of verdict which the instigators of the meeting no doubt wish should be brought in, and to give countenance to the jury in so doing.

I am, sir,
With much respect to the
Gentlemen who shall meet,
Their and your obedient humble servant,
THOMAS PAINE.

LETTER II.

TO THE SAME.

SIR, LONDON, JUNE 21, 1792.

WHEN I wrote you the letter which Mr. HORNE TOOKE did me the favour to present to you, as chairman of the meeting held at Epsom, Monday, June 18, it was not with much expectation that you would do me the justice of permitting, or recommending it to be publicly read. I am well aware that the signature of THOMAS PAINE has something in it dreadful to sinecure placemen and pensioners; and when you, on seeing the letter opened, informed the meeting that it was signed THOMAS PAINE, and added, in a note of exclamation, "the common enemy of us all," you spoke one of the greatest truths you ever uttered, if you confine the expression to men of the same description with yourself; men living in indolence and luxury, on the spoil and labours of the public.

The letter has since appeared in the ARGUS, and probably in other papers. It will justify itself; but if any thing on that account hath been wanting, your own conduct at the meeting would have supplied the omission. You there sufficiently proved that I was not mistaken in supposing that the meeting was called to give an indirect aid to the prosecution commenced against a work, the reputation of which will long out-live the memory of the pensioner I am writing to.

When meetings, sir, are called by the partizans of the court, to

preclude the nation the right of inveſtigating ſyſtems and principles of government, and of expoſing errors and defects, under the pretence of proſecuting any individual—it furniſhes an additional motive for maintaining ſacred that violated right.

The principles and arguments contained in the work in queſtion, RIGHTS OF MAN, have ſtood, and they now ſtand, and I believe ever will ſtand, unrefuted. They are ſtated in a fair and open manner to the world, and they have already received the public aprobation of a greater number of men, of the beſt of characters, of every denomination of religion, and of every rank in life (placemen and penſioners excepted), than all the juries that ſhall meet in England, for ten years to come, will amount to; and I have moreover good reaſons for believing that the approvers of that work, as well private as public, are already more numerous than all the preſent electors throughout the nation.

Not leſs than forty pamphlets, intended as anſwers thereto, have appeared, and as ſuddenly diſappeared: Scarcely are the titles of any of them remembered, notwithſtanding their endeavours have been aided by all the daily abuſe which the court and miniſterial newſpapers, for almoſt a year and a half, could beſtow, both upon the work and the author; and now that every attempt to refute, and every abuſe has failed, the invention of calling the work a libel has been hit upon, and the diſcomfited party has puſillanimouſly retreated to proſecution and a jury, and obſcure addreſſes.

As I well know that a long letter from me will not be agreeable to you, I will relieve your uneaſineſs by making it as ſhort as I conveniently can; and will conclude it with taking up the ſubject at that part where Mr. HORNE TOOKE was interrupted from going on when at the meeting.

That gentleman was ſtating, that the ſituation you ſtood in rendered it improper for you to appear *actively* in a ſcene in which your private intereſt was too viſible: that you were a bedchamber lord at a thouſand a year, and a penſioner at three thouſand pounds a year more—and here he was ſtopped by the little, but noiſy circle you had collected round. Permit me then, ſir, to add an explanation to his words, for the benefit of your neighbours, and with which, and a few obſervations, I ſhall cloſe my letter.

When it was reported in the Engliſh newſpapers, ſome ſhort time ſince, that the empreſs of Ruſſia had given to one of her minions a large tract of country, and ſeveral thouſands of peaſants as property, it very juſtly provoked indignation and abhorrence in thoſe who heard

it. But if we compare the mode practiſed in England, with that which appears to us ſo abhorrent in Ruſſia, it will be found to amount to very near the ſame thing;—for example—

As the whole of the revenue in England is drawn by taxes from the pockets of the people, thoſe things called gifts and grants (of which kind are all penſions and ſinecure places) are paid out of that ſtock. The difference, therefore, between the two modes is, that in England the money is collected by the government, and then given to the penſioner, and in Ruſſia he is left to collect it for himſelf. The ſmalleſt ſum which the pooreſt family in a county ſo near London as Surry, can be ſuppoſed to pay annually of taxes, is not leſs than five pounds; and as your ſinecure of one thouſand, and penſion of three thouſand per annum, are made up of taxes paid by eight hundred ſuch poor families, it comes to the ſame thing as if the eight hundred families had been given to you, as in Ruſſia, and you had collected the money on your account. Were you to ſay that you are not quartered particularly on the people of Surry, but on the nation at large, the objection would amount to nothing; for as there are more penſioners than counties, every one may be conſidered as quartered on that in which he lives.

What honour or happineſs you can derive from being the PRINCIPAL PAUPER of the neighbourhood, and occaſioning a greater expence than the poor, the aged, and the infirm, for ten miles round you, I leave you to enjoy. At the ſame time I can ſee that it is no wonder you ſhould be ſtrenuous in ſuppreſſing a book which ſtrikes at the root of thoſe abuſes. No wonder that you ſhould be againſt reforms, againſt the freedom of the preſs, and the right of inveſtigation. To you, and to others of your deſcription, theſe are dreadful things; but you ſhould alſo conſider, that the motives which prompt you to *act*, ought, by reflection, to compel you to be *ſilent*.

Having now returned your compliment, and ſufficiently tired your patience, I take my leave of you with mentioning, that if you had not prevented my former letter from being read at the meeting, you would not have had the trouble of reading this; and alſo with requeſting, that the next time you call me "*a common enemy*," you would add, "*of us ſinecure placemen and penſioners.*"

I am, Sir,

&c. &c. &c.

THOMAS PAINE

DISSERTATION

ON

FIRST-PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT.

THERE is no ſubject more intereſting to every man than the ſubject of government. His ſecurity, be he rich or poor, and, in a great meaſure, his proſperity, is connected therewith; it is therefore his intereſt as well as his duty to make himſelf acquainted with its principles, and what the practice ought to be.

Every art and ſcience, however imperfectly known at firſt, has been ſtudied, improved, and brought to what we call perfection, by the progreſſive labours of ſucceeding generations; but the ſcience of government has ſtood ſtill. No improvement has been made in the principle, and ſcarcely any in the practice, till the American revolution began. In all the countries of Europe (except in France) the ſame forms and ſyſtems that were erected in the remote ages of ignorance ſtill continue, and their antiquity is put in the place of principle; it is forbidden to inveſtigate their origin or by what right they exiſt. If it be aſked how has this happened, the anſwer is eaſy; they are eſtabliſhed on a principle that is falſe, and they employ their power to prevent detection.

Notwithſtanding the myſtery with which the ſcience of government has been enveloped, for the purpoſe of enſlaving, plundering and impoſing upon mankind, it is of all things the leaſt myſterious and the moſt eaſy to be underſtood. The meaneſt capacity cannot be at a loſs, if it begins its enquiries at the right point. Every art and ſcience has ſome point, or alphabet, at which the ſtudy of that art or ſcience begins, and by the aſſiſtance of which the progreſs is facilitated. The ſame method ought to be obſerved with reſpect to the ſcience of goverment.

Inſtead then of embarraſſing the ſubject in the outſet with the numerous ſubdiviſions, under which different forms of government have been claſſed, ſuch as ariſtocracy, democracy, oligarchy, monarchy, &c. the better method will be to begin with what may be called primary diviſions, or thoſe under which all the ſeveral ſubdiviſions will be comprehended.

The primary diviſions are but two.

Firſt, government by election and repreſentation.

Secondly, government by hereditary ſucceſſion.

All the ſeveral forms and ſyſtems of government, however numerous or diverſified, claſs themſelves under one or other of thoſe primary diviſions; for either they are on the ſyſtem of repreſentation, or on that of hereditary ſucceſſion. As to that equivocal thing called mixed government, ſuch as the late government of Holland, and the preſent government of England, it does not make an exception to the general rule, becauſe the parts ſeparately conſidered are either repreſentative or hereditary.

Beginning then our enquiries at this point, we have firſt to examine into the nature of thoſe two primary diviſions. If they are equally right in principle, it is mere matter of opinion which we prefer. If the one be demonſtratively better than the other, that difference directs our choice; but if one of them ſhould be ſo abſolutely falſe as not to have a right to exiſtence, the matter ſettles itſelf at once; becauſe a negative proved on one thing, where two only are offered, and one muſt be accepted, amounts to an affirmative on the other.

The revolutions that are now ſpreading themſelves in the world have their origin in this ſtate of the caſe, and the preſent war is a conflict between the repreſentative ſyſtem, founded on the rights of the people, and the hereditary ſyſtem, founded in uſurpation. As to what are called monarchy, royalty, and ariſtocracy, they do not, either as things or as terms, ſufficiently deſcribe the hereditary ſyſtem; they are but ſecondary things or ſigns of the hereditary ſyſtem, and which fall of themſelves if that ſyſtem has not a right to exiſt. Were there no ſuch terms as monarchy, royalty, and ariſtocracy, or were other terms ſubſtituted in their place, the hereditary ſyſtem, if it continued, would not be altered thereby. It would be the ſame ſyſtem under any other titulary name as it is now.

The character therefore of the revolutions of the preſent day diſtinguiſhes itſelf moſt definitively by grounding itſelf on the ſyſtem of repreſentative government, in oppoſition to the hereditary. No other diſtinction reaches the whole of the principle.

Having thus opened the caſe generally, I proceed, in the firſt place, to examine the hereditary ſyſtem, becauſe it has the priority in point of time. The repreſentative ſyſtem is the invention of the modern world; and that no doubt may ariſe as to my own opinion, I declare it before-hand, which is, *that there is not a problem in Euclid*

more mechanically true, than that hereditary government has not a right to exiſt. When therefore we take from any man the exerciſe of hereditary power, we take away that which he never had the right to poſſeſs, and which no law or cuſtom could, or ever can, give him a title to.

The arguments that have hitherto been employed againſt the hereditary ſyſtem have been chiefly founded upon the abſurdity of it, and its incompetency to the purpoſe of good government. Nothing can preſent to our judgment, or to our imagination, a figure of greater abſurdity than that of ſeeing the government of a nation fall, as it frequently does, into the hands of a lad neceſſarily deſtitute of experience, and often little better than a fool. It is an inſult to every man of years, of character, and of talents, in a country. The moment we begin to reaſon upon the hereditary ſyſtem, it falls into deriſion; let but a ſingle idea begin, and a thouſand will ſoon follow. Inſignificance, imbecility, childhood, dotage, want of moral character; in fine, every defect, ſerious or laughable, unite to hold up the hereditary ſyſtem as a figure of ridicule. Leaving however the ridiculouſneſs of the thing to the reflections of the reader, I proceed to the more important part of the queſtion, namely, whether ſuch a ſyſtem has a right to exiſt?

To be ſatisfied of the right of a thing to exiſt, we muſt be ſatisfied that it had a right to begin. If it had not a right to begin, it has not a right to continue. By what right then did the hereditary ſyſtem begin? Let a man but aſk himſelf this queſtion, and he will find that he cannot ſatisfy himſelf with an anſwer.

The right which any man, or any family had to ſet himſelf up at firſt to govern a nation, and to eſtabliſh itſelf hereditarily, was no other than the right which Robeſpierre had to do the ſame thing in France. If he had none, they had none. If they had any, he had as much; for it is impoſſible to diſcover ſuperiority of right in any family, by virtue of which hereditary government could begin. The Capets, the Guelphs, the Robeſpierres, the Marats, are all on the ſame ſtanding as to the queſtion of right. It belongs excluſively to none.

It is one ſtep towards liberty, to perceive that hereditary government could not begin as an excluſive right in any family. The next point will be, whether, having once began, it could grow into a right by the influence of time?

This would be ſuppoſing an abſurdity; for either it is putting time in the place of principle, or making it ſuperior to principle; whereas no time has more connection with, or influence upon prin-

ciple, than principle has upon time. The wrong which began a thouſand years ago, is as much a wrong as if it began to-day; and the right which originates to-day, is as much a right as if it had the ſanction of a thouſand years. Time with reſpect to principles is an eternal NOW: it has no operation upon them: it changes nothing of their nature and qualities. But what have we to do with a thouſand years. Our life-time is but a ſhort portion of that period, and if we find the wrong in exiſtence as ſoon as we begin to live, that is the point of time at which it begins to us; and our right to reſiſt it, is the ſame as if it had never exiſted before.

As hereditary government could not begin as a natural right in any family, nor derive after its commencement any right from time, we have only to examine whether there exiſt in a nation a right to ſet it up and eſtabliſh it by what is called law, as has been done in England? I anſwer NO; and that any law or any conſtitution made for that purpoſe is an act of treaſon againſt the rights of every minor in the nation, at the time it is made, and againſt the rights of all ſucceeding generations. I ſhall ſpeak upon each of thoſe caſes. Firſt, of the minor, at the time ſuch law is made. Secondly, of the generations that are to follow.

A nation in a collective ſenſe, comprehends all the individuals of whatever age, from juſt born to juſt dying. Of theſe, one part will be minors, and the other aged. The average of life is not exactly the ſame in every climate and country, but in general the minority in years are the majority in numbers, that is, the number of perſons under twenty-one years, is greater than the number of perſons above that age. This difference in number is not neceſſary to the eſtabliſhment of the principle I mean to lay down, but it ſerves to ſhew the juſtice of it more ſtrongly. The principle would be equally good, if the majority in years were alſo the majority in numbers.

The rights of minors are as ſacred as the rights of the aged. The difference is altogether in the different ages of the two parties, and nothing in the nature of the rights; the rights are the ſame rights; and are to be preſerved inviolate for the inheritance of the minors when they ſhall come of age. During the minority of minors their rights are under the ſacred guardianſhip of the aged. The minor cannot ſurrender them; the guardian cannot diſpoſſeſs him; conſequently, the aged part of a nation, who are the lawmakers for the *time being*, and who, in the march of life, are but a few years a-head of thoſe who are yet minors, and to whom they muſt ſhortly give place, have not, and cannot have the right to make a law to ſet up

and eſtabliſh hereditary government, or, to ſpeak more diſtinctly, *an hereditary ſucceſſion of governors*; becauſe it is an attempt to deprive every minor in the nation, at the time ſuch a law is made, of his inheritance of rights when he ſhall come of age, and to ſubjugate him to a ſyſtem of government, to which, during his minority, he could neither conſent nor object.

If a perſon, who is a minor at the time ſuch a law is propoſed, had happened to have been born a few years ſooner, ſo as to be of the age of twenty-one years at the time of propoſing it, his right to have objected againſt it, to have expoſed the injuſtice and tyrannical principles of it, and to have voted againſt it, will be admitted on all ſides. If, therefore, the law operates to prevent his exerciſing the ſame rights after he comes of age as he would have had a right to exerciſe had he been of age at the time, it is, undeniably, a law to take away and annul the rights of every perſon in the nation who ſhall be a minor at the time of making ſuch a law, and conſequently the right to make it cannot exiſt.

I come now to ſpeak of government by hereditary ſucceſſion as it applies to ſucceeding generations; and to ſhew that in this caſe, as in the caſe of minors, there does not exiſt in a nation a right to ſet it up.

A nation, though continually exiſting, is continually in a ſtate of renewal and ſucceſſion. It is never ſtationary. Every day produces new births, carries minors forward to maturity, and old perſons from the ſtage. In this ever-running flood of generations there is no part ſuperior in authority to another. Could we conceive an idea of ſuperiority in any, at what point of time, or in what century of the world, are we to fix it? To what cauſe are we to aſcribe it? By what evidence are we to prove it? By what criterion are we to know it? A ſingle reflexion will teach us that our anceſtors, like ourſelves, were but tenants for life in the great freehold of rights. The fee-abſolute was not in them, it is not in us, it belongs to the whole family of man, through all ages. If we think otherwiſe than this, we think either as ſlaves or as tyrants. As ſlaves, if we think that any former generation had a right to bind us; as tyrants, if we think that we have authority to bind the generations that are to follow.

It may not be inapplicable to the ſubject, to endeavour to define what is to be underſtood by a generation in the ſenſe of the word as here uſed.

As a natural term its meaning is ſufficiently clear. The father,

the ſon, the grandſon, are ſo many diſtinct generations. But when we ſpeak of a generation as deſcribing the perſons in whom legal authority reſides, as diſtinct from another generation of the ſame deſcription who are to ſucceed them, it comprehends all thoſe who are above the age of twenty-one years, at the time we count from; and a generation of this kind will continue in authority between fourteen and twenty-one years, that is, until the number of minors, who ſhall have arrived at age, ſhall be greater than the number of perſons remaining of the former ſtock.

For example, if France at this or any other moment, contain twenty-four millions of ſouls, twelve millions will be males, and twelve females. Of the twelve millions of males, ſix millions will be of the age of twenty-one years, and ſix will be under, and the authority to govern will reſide in the firſt ſix. But every day will make ſome alteration, and in twenty-one years every one of thoſe minors who ſurvive will have arrived at age, and the greater part of the former ſtock will be gone; the majority of perſons then living, in whom the legal authority reſides, will be compoſed of thoſe who, twenty-one years before, had no legal exiſtence. Thoſe will be fathers and grandfathers in their turn, and in the next twenty-one years, (or leſs) another race of minors, arrived at age, will ſucceed them, and ſo on.

As this is ever the caſe, and as every generation is equal in rights to another, it conſequently follows, that there cannot be a right in any to eſtabliſh government by hereditary ſucceſſion, becauſe it would be ſuppoſing itſelf poſſeſſed of a right ſuperior to the reſt, namely, that of commanding by its own authority how the world ſhall be hereafter governed, and who ſhall govern it. Every age and generation is and muſt be (as a matter of right) as free to act for itſelf in all caſes, as the age and generation that preceded it. The vanity and preſumption of governing beyond the grave is the moſt ridiculous and inſolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man, neither has one generation a property in the generations that are to follow.

In the firſt part of *Rights of Man* I have ſpoken of government by hereditary ſucceſſion; and I will here cloſe the ſubject with an extract from that work, which ſtates it under the two following heads.

"Firſt, of the right of any family to eſtabliſh itſelf with hereditary power.

" Secondly, of the right of a nation to eſtabliſh a particular family.

" With reſpect to the firſt of thoſe heads, that of a family eſtabliſhing itſelf with hereditary powers on its own authority, independent of the nation, all men will concur in calling it deſpotiſm, and it would be treſpaſſing on their underſtanding to attempt to prove it.

" But the ſecond head, that of a nation, that is, of a generation for the time being, eſtabliſhing a particular family with hereditary powers, it does not preſent itſelf as deſpotiſm on the firſt reflection; but if men will permit a ſecond reflection to take place, and carry that reflection forward, even but one remove out of their own perſons to that of their offspring, they will then ſee, that hereditary ſucceſſion becomes the ſame deſpotiſm to others, which the firſt perſons reprobated for themſelves. It operates to preclude the conſent of the ſucceeding generation, and the preclusion of conſent is deſpotiſm.

" In order to ſee this matter more clearly, let us conſider the generation which undertakes to eſtabliſh a family with hereditary powers, ſeparately from the generations which are to follow.

" The generation which firſt ſelects a perſon and puts him at the head of its government, either with the title of king, or any other nominal diſtinction, acts its own choice, as a free agent for itſelf, be that choice wiſe or fooliſh. The perſon ſo ſet up is *not hereditary*, but ſelected and appointed; and the generation which ſets him up does not live under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice. Were the perſon ſo ſet up, and the generation who ſets him up, to live for ever, it never could become hereditary ſucceſſion, and of conſequence, hereditary ſucceſſion could only follow on the death of the firſt parties.

" As therefore hereditary ſucceſſion is out of the queſtion with reſpect to the firſt generation, we have next to conſider the character in which that generation acts towards the commencing generation, and to all ſucceeding ones.

" It aſſumes a character to which it has neither right nor title; for it changes itſelf from a legiſlator to a teſtator, and affects to make a will and teſtament which is to have operation, after the demiſe of the makers, to bequeath the government; and it not only attempts to bequeath, but to eſtabliſh on the ſucceeding generation a new and different form of government under which itſelf lived. Itſelf, as already obſerved, lived not under an hereditary government, but un-

der a government of its own choice; and now it attempts, by virtue of a will and teſtament, which it has not authority to make, to take from the commencing generation, and from all future ones, the right and free agency by which itſelf acted.

"In whatever light hereditary ſucceſſion, as growing out of the will and teſtament of ſome former generation, preſents itſelf, it is both criminal and abſurd. A cannot make a will to take from B the property of B, and give it to C; yet this is the manner in which what is called hereditary ſucceſſion by law operates. A certain generation makes a will, under the form of a law, to take away the rights of the commencing generation, and of all future generations, and convey thoſe rights to a third perſon, who afterwards comes forward, and aſſumes the government in conſequence of that illicit conveyance."

The hiſtory of the Engliſh parliament furniſhes an example of this kind; and which merits to be recorded, as being the greateſt inſtance of legiſlative ignorance and want of principle that is to be found in the hiſtory of any country. The caſe is as follows:

The Engliſh parliament of 1688 imported a man and his wife from Holland, *William* and *Mary*, and made them king and queen of England. Having done this, the ſaid parliament made a law to convey the government of the country to the heirs of William and Mary, in the following words, "We, the lords ſpiritual and temporal, and commons, do, in the name of the people of England, moſt humbly and faithfully ſubmit *ourſelves, our heirs, and poſterities*, to William and Mary, *their heirs and poſterities*, for ever." And in a ſubſequent law, as quoted by Edmund Burke, the ſaid parliament, in the name of the people of England then living, *binds the ſaid people, their heirs and poſterities, to William and Mary, their heirs and poſterities, to the end of time.*

It is not ſufficient that we laugh at the ignorance of ſuch lawmakers, it is neceſſary that we reprobate their want of principle. The conſtituent aſſembly of France (1789) fell into the ſame vice as the parliament of England had done, and aſſumed to eſtabliſh an hereditary ſucceſſion in the family of the Capets, as an act of the conſtitution of that year. That every nation, *for the time being*, has a right to govern itſelf as it pleaſes, muſt always be admitted; but government by hereditary ſucceſſion is government for another race of people, and not for itſelf; and as thoſe on whom it is to operate are not yet in exiſtence, or are minors, ſo neither is the right in exiſtence to ſet it up for them, and to aſſume ſuch a right is treaſon againſt the right of poſterity.

I here close the arguments on the first head, that of government by hereditary succession; and proceed to the second, that of government by election and representation; or, as it may be concisely expressed, *representative government* in contradistinction to *hereditary government*.

Reasoning by exclusion, if *hereditary government* has not a right to exist, and that it has not is proveable, *representative government* is admitted of course.

In contemplating government by election and representation, we amuse not ourselves in enquiring when or how, or by what right it began. Its origin is ever in view. Man is himself the origin and the evidence of the right. It appertains to him in right of his existence, and his person is the title-deed.

The true and only true basis of representative government is equality of rights. Every man has a right to one vote, and no more, in the choice of representatives. The rich have no more right to exclude the poor from the right of voting or of electing and being elected than the poor have to exclude the rich; and wherever it is attempted, or proposed, on either side, it is a question of force, and not of right. Who is he that would exclude another?—That other has a right to exclude him.

That which is now called aristocracy implies an inequality of rights; but who are the persons that have a right to establish this inequality? Will the rich exclude themselves? No! Will the poor exclude themselves? No! By what right then can any be excluded? It would be a question, if any man, or class of men, have a right to exclude themselves; but be this as it may, they cannot have the right to exclude another. The poor will not delegate such a right to the rich, nor the rich to the poor, and to assume it is not only to assume arbitrary power, but to assume a right to commit robbery. Personal rights, of which the right of voting for representatives is one, are a species of property of the most sacred kind; and he that would employ his pecuniary property, or presume upon the influence it gives him, to dispossess or rob another of his property of rights, uses that pecuniary property as he would use fire-arms, and merits to have it taken from him.

Inequality of rights is created by a combination in one part of the community to exclude another part from its rights. Whenever it may be made an article of a constitution, or a law, that the right of voting, or of electing and being elected, shall appertain exclusively to persons possessing a certain quantity of property, be it little or

much, it is a combination of the perſons poſſeſſing that quantity, to exclude thoſe who do not poſſeſs the ſame quantity. It is inveſting themſelves with powers as a ſelf-created part of ſociety, to the excluſion of the reſt.

It is always to be taken for granted, that thoſe who oppoſe an equality of rights, never mean the excluſion ſhould take place on themſelves; and in this view of the caſe, pardoning the vanity of the thing, ariſtocracy is a ſubject of laughter. This ſelf-ſoothing vanity is encouraged by another idea not leſs ſelfiſh, which is, that the oppoſers conceive they are playing a ſafe game, in which there is a chance to gain and none to loſe; that at any rate the doctrine of equality includes *them*, and that if they cannot get more rights than thoſe whom they oppoſe and would exclude, they ſhall not have leſs. This opinion has already been fatal to thouſands who, not contented with *equal rights*, have fought more till they loſt all, and experienced in themſelves the degrading *inequality* they endeavoured to fix upon others.

In any view of the caſe it is dangerous and impolitic, ſometimes ridiculous, and always unjuſt, to make property the criterion of the right of voting. If the ſum, or value of the property upon which the right is to take place be conſiderable, it will exclude a majority of the people, and unite them in a common intereſt againſt the government and againſt thoſe who ſupport it, and as the power is always with the majority, they can overturn ſuch a government and its ſupporters whenever they pleaſe.

If, in order to avoid this danger, a ſmall quantity of property be fixed, as the criterion of the right, its exhibits liberty in diſgrace, by putting it in competition with accident and inſignificance. When a brood-mare ſhall fortunately produce a foal or a mule, that by being worth the ſum in queſtion, ſhall convey to its owner the right of voting, or by its death take it from him, in whom does the origin of ſuch a right exiſt? Is it in the man, or in the mule? When we conſider how many ways property may be acquired without merit, and loſt without a crime, we ought to ſpurn the idea of making it a criterion of rights.

But the offenſive part of the caſe is, that this excluſion from the right of voting implies a ſtigma on the moral character of the perſons excluded; and this is what no part of the community has a right to pronounce upon another part. No external circumſtance can juſtify it; wealth is no proof of moral character; nor poverty of the want of it. On the contrary, wealth is often the preſumptive evi-

dence of diſhoneſty; and poverty the negative evidence of innocence. If therefore property, whether little or much, be made a criterion, the means by which that property has been acquired, ought to be made a criterion alſo.

The only ground upon which excluſion from the right of voting is conſiſtent with juſtice, would be to inflict it as a puniſhment for a certain time upon thoſe who ſhould propoſe to take away that right from others. The right of voting for repreſentatives is the primary right by which other rights are protected. To take away this right is to reduce a man to a ſtate of ſlavery, for ſlavery conſiſts in being ſubject to the will of another, and he that has not a vote in the election of repreſentatives, is in this caſe. The propoſal therefore to diſfranchiſe any claſs of men is as criminal as the propoſal to take away property. When we ſpeak of right, we ought always to unite with it the idea of duties: Right becomes duties by reciprocity. The right which I enjoy becomes my duty to guarantee it to another, and he to me; and thoſe who violate the duty juſtly incur a forfeiture of the right.

In a political view of the caſe, the ſtrength and permanent ſecurity of government is in proportion to the number of people intereſted in ſupporting it. The true policy therefore is to intereſt the whole by an equality of rights, for the danger ariſes from excluſions. It is poſſible to exclude men from the right of voting, but it is impoſſible to exclude them from the right of rebelling againſt that excluſion: and when all other rights are taken away, the right of rebellion is made perfect.

While men could be perſuaded they had no rights, or that rights appertained only to a certain claſs of men, or that government was a thing exiſting in right of itſelf, it was not difficult to govern them authoritatively. The ignorance in which they were held, and the ſuperſtition in which they were inſtructed, furniſhed the means of doing it; but when the ignorance is gone, and the ſuperſtitition with it; when they perceive the impoſition that has been acted upon them; when they reflect that the cultivator and the manufacturer are the primary means of all the wealth that exiſts in the world, beyond what nature ſpontaneouſly produces; when they begin to feel their conſequence by their uſefulneſs, and their right as members of ſociety, it is then no longer poſſible to govern them as before. The fraud once detected cannot be reacted. To attempt it is to provoke deriſion, or invite deſtruction.

That property will ever be unequal is certain. Induſtry, ſuperiority of talents, or dexterity of management, extreme frugality, fortu-

nate opportunities, or the oppoſite, or the mean of thoſe things, will ever produce that effect without having recourſe to the harſh ill-ſounding names of avarice and oppreſſion; and beſides this, there are ſome men who, though they do not deſpiſe wealth, will not ſtoop to the drudgery of the means of acquiring it, nor will be troubled with the care of it, beyond their wants or their independence; whilſt in others there is an avidity to obtain it by every means not puniſhable; it makes the ſole buſineſs of their lives, and they follow it as a religion. *All that is required with reſpect to property is to obtain it honeſtly, and not employ it criminally; but it is always criminally employed, when it is made a criterion for excluſive rights.*

In inſtitutions that are purely pecuniary, ſuch as that of a bank or a commercial company, the rights of the members compoſing that company are wholly created by the property they inveſt therein; and no other rights are repreſented in the government of that company, than what ariſe out of that property; neither has that government cognizance of *any thing but property*.

But the caſe is totally different with reſpect to the inſtitution or civil government, organized on the ſyſtem of repreſentation. Such a government has cognizance of *every thing*, and of *every man* as a member of the national ſociety, whether he has property or not; and therefore the principle requires that every man and *every kind of right* be repreſented, of which the right to acquire and to hold property is but one, and that not of the moſt eſſential kind. The protection of a man's perſon is more ſacred than the protection of property; and beſides this, the faculty of performing any kind of work or ſervice by which he acquires a livelihood, or maintaining his family, is of the nature of property. It is property to him; he has acquired it; and it is as much the object of his protection, as exterior property, poſſeſſed without that faculty, can be the object of protection to another perſon.

I have always believed that the beſt ſecurity for property, be it much or little, is to remove from every part of the community, as far as can poſſibly be done, every cauſe of complaint, and every motive to violence; and this can only be done by an equality of rights. When rights are ſecure, property is ſecure in conſequence. But when property is made a pretence for unequal or excluſive rights, it weakens the right to hold the property, and provokes indignation and tumult; for it is unnatural to believe that property can be ſecure under the guarantee of a ſociety injured in its rights b the influence of that property.

Next to the injuſtice and ill-policy of making property a pretence for excluſive rights, is the unaccountable abſurdity of giving to mere *found* the idea of property, and annexing to it certain rights; for what elſe is a *title* but found. Nature is often giving to the world ſome extraordinary men who arrive at fame by merit and univerſal conſent, ſuch as Ariſtotle, Socrates, Plato, &c. Theſe were truly great or noble. But when government ſets up a manufactory of nobles, it is as abſurd, as if ſhe undertook to manufacture wiſe men. *Her nobles are all counterfeits.*

As property honeſtly obtained is beſt ſecured by an equality of rights, ſo ill-gotten property depends for protection on a monopoly of rights. He who has robbed another of his property, will next endeavour to diſarm him of his rights, to ſecure that property; for when the robber becomes the legiſlator he believes himſelf ſecure. That part of the government of England that is called the houſe of lords was originally compoſed of perſons who had committed the robberies of which I have been ſpeaking. It was an aſſociation for the protection of the property they had ſtolen.

But beſides the criminality of the origin of ariſtocracy, it has an injurious effect on the moral and phyſical character of man. Like ſlavery, it debilitates the human faculties; for as the mind, bowed down by ſlavery, loſes in ſilence its elaſtic powers, ſo, in the contrary extreme, when it is buoyed up by folly, it becomes incapable of exerting them, and dwindles into imbecility. It is impoſſible that a mind employed upon ribands and titles can ever be great. The childiſhneſs of the objects conſumes the man.

It is at all times neceſſary, and more particularly ſo during the progreſs of a revolution, and until right ideas confirm themſelves by habit, that we frequently refreſh our patriotiſm by reference to firſt principles. It is by tracing things to their origin that we learn to underſtand them; and it is by keeping that line and that origin always in view that we never forget them.

An enquiry into the origin of rights will demonſtrate to us that *rights* are not *gifts* from one man to another, nor from one claſs of men to another; for who is he who could be the firſt giver, or by what principle, or on what authority, could he poſſeſs the right of giving? A declaration of rights is not a creation of them, nor a donation of them. It is a manifeſt of the principle by which they exiſt, followed by a detail of what the rights are; for every civil right has a natural right for its foundation, and it includes the principle of a reciprocal guarantee of thoſe rights from man to man. As therefore

it is impoſſible to diſcover any origin of rights otherwiſe than in the origin of man, it conſequently follows, that rights appertain to man in right of his exiſtence only, and muſt therefore be equal to every man. The principle of an *equality of rights* is clear and ſimple. Every man can underſtand it, and it is by underſtanding his rights that he learns his duties; for where the rights of men are equal, every man muſt finally ſee the neceſſity of protecting the rights of others as the moſt effectual ſecurity for his own. But if in the formation of a conſtitution we depart from the principle of equal rights, or attempt any modification of it, we plunge into a labyrinth of difficulties from which there is no way out but by retreating. Where are we to ſtop? Or by what principle are we to find out the point to ſtop at, that ſhall diſcriminate between men of the ſame country, part of whom ſhall be free, and the reſt not? If property is to be made the criterion, it is a total departure from every moral principle of liberty, becauſe it is attaching rights to mere matter, and making man the agent of that matter. It is moreover holding up property as an apple of diſcord, and not only exciting but juſtifying war againſt it; for I maintain the principle, that when property is uſed as an inſtrument to take away the rights of thoſe who may happen not to poſſeſs property, it is uſed to an unlawful purpoſe, as fire-arms would be in a ſimilar caſe.

In a ſtate of nature all men are equal in rights, but they are not equal in power; the weak cannot protect himſelf againſt the ſtrong. This being the caſe, the inſtitution of civil ſociety is for the purpoſe of making an equalization of powers that ſhall be parallel to, and a guarantee of the equality of rights. The laws of a country when properly conſtructed apply to this purpoſe. Every man takes the arm of the law for his protection as more effectual than his own; and therefore every man has an equal right in the formation of the government and of the laws by which he is to be governed and judged. In extenſive countries and ſocieties, ſuch as America and France, this right, in the individual can only be exerciſed by delegation, that is, by election and repreſentation; and hence it is that the inſtitution of repreſentative government ariſes.

Hitherto I have confined myſelf to matters of principle only. Firſt, that hereditary government has not a right to exiſt; that it cannot be eſtabliſhed on any principle of right; and that it is a violation of all principle. Secondly, that government by election and repreſentation has its origin in the natural and eternal rights of man; for whether a man be his own lawgiver, as he would be in a ſtate of

nature; or whether he exercises his portion of legislative sovereignty in his own person, as might be the case in small democracies where all could assemble for the formation of the laws by which they were to be governed; or whether he exercises it in the choice of persons to represent him in a national assembly of representatives, the origin of the right is the same in all cases. The first, as is before observed, is defective in power; the second, is practicable only in democracies of small extent; the third, is the greatest scale upon which human government can be instituted.

Next to matters of *principle*, are matters of *opinion*, and it is necessary to distinguish between the two. Whether the rights of men shall be equal is not a matter of opinion but of right, and consequently of principle; for men do not hold their rights as grants from each other, but each one in right of himself. Society is the guardian but not the giver. And as in extensive societies, such as America and France, the right of the individual in matters of government, cannot be exercised but by election and representation; it consequently follows, that the only system of government, consistent with principle, where simple democracy is impracticable, is the representative system. But as to the organical part, or the manner in which the several parts of government shall be arranged and composed, it is altogether *matter of opinion*. It is necessary that all the parts be conformable with the *principle of equal rights;* and so long as this principle be religiously adhered to, no very material error can take place, neither can any error continue long in that part that falls within the province of opinion.

In all matters of opinion, the social compact, or the principle by which society is held together, requires that the majority of opinions becomes the rule for the whole, and that the minority yields practical obedience thereto. This is perfectly conformable to the principle of equal rights; for, in the first place, every man has a *right to give an opinion*, but no man has a right that his own should govern the rest. In the second place, it is not supposed to be known before-hand on which side of any question, whether for or against, any man's opinion will fall. He may happen to be in a majority upon some questions, and in a minority upon others; and by the same rule that he expects obedience in the one case, he must yield it in the other. All the disorders that have arisen in France during the progress of the revolution have had their origin, not in the *principle of equal rights*, but in the violation of that principle. The principle of equal rights has been repeatedly violated, and that not by the majority, but by the

minority, and *that minority has been compoſed of men poſſeſſing property, as well as of men without property; property therefore, even upon the experience already had, is no more a criterion of character than it is of rights.* It will ſometimes happen that the minority are right, and the majority are wrong, but as ſoon as experience proves this to be the caſe, the minority will increaſe to a majority, and the error will reform itſelf by the tranquil operation of freedom of opinion and equality of rights. Nothing therefore can juſtify an inſurrection, neither can it ever be neceſſary, where rights are equal and opinions free.

Taking then the principle of equal rights as the foundation of the revolution, and conſequently of the conſtitution, the organical part, or the manner in which the ſeveral parts of the government ſhall be aranged in the conſtitution, will, as is already ſaid, fall within the province of opinion.

Various methods will preſent themſelves upon a queſtion of this kind, and though experience is yet wanting to determine which is the beſt, it has, I think, ſufficiently decided which is the worſt. That is the worſt, which in its deliberations and deciſions is ſubject to the precipitancy and paſſion of an individual; and when the whole legiſlature is crowded into one body, it is an individual in maſs. In all caſes of deliberation it is neceſſary to have a corps of reſerve, and it would be better to divide the repreſentation by lot into two parts, and let them reviſe and correct each other, than that the whole ſhould ſit together and debate at once.

Repreſentative government is not neceſſarily confined to any one particular form. The principle is the ſame in all the forms under which it can be arranged. The equal rights of the people is the root from which the whole ſprings, and the branches may be arranged as preſent opinion or future experience ſhall beſt direct. As to that *hoſpital of incurables* (as Cheſterfield calls it) the Britiſh houſe of peers, it is an excreſcence growing out of corruption; and there is no more affinity or reſemblance between any of the branches of a legiſlative body originating from the right of the people, and the aforeſaid houſe of peers, than between a regular member of the human body and an ulcerated wen.

As to that part of government that is called the *executive*, it is neceſſary in the firſt place to fix a preciſe meaning to the word.

There are but two diviſions into which power can be arranged. Firſt, that of willing or decreeing the laws; ſecondly, that of executing or putting them in practice. The former, correſponds to the intellectual faculties of the human mind, which reaſons and deter-

mines what ſhall be done; the ſecond to the mechanical powers of the human body that puts that determination into practice. If the former decides, and the latter does not perform, it is a ſtate of imbecility; and if the latter acts without the predetermination of the former, it is a ſtate of lunacy. The executive department therefore is official, and is ſubordinate to the legiſlative, as the body is to the mind in a ſtate of health; for, it is impoſſible to conceive the idea of two ſovereignties, a ſovereignty to *will*, and a ſovereignty to *act*. The executive is not inveſted with the power of deliberating whether it ſhall act or not; it has no diſcretionary authority in the caſe; for it can *act no other thing* that what the laws decree, and it is *obliged* to act conformably thereto; and in this view of the caſe, the executive is made up of all the official departments that execute the laws, of which, that which is called the judiciary is the chief.

But mankind have conceived an idea that *ſome kind of authority* is neceſſary to *ſuperintend* the execution of the laws, and to ſee that they are faithfully performed; and it is by confounding this ſuperintending authority with the official execution that we get embarraſſed about the term *executive power*.—All the parts in the governments of the United States of America that are called THE EXECUTIVE, are no other than authorities to ſuperintend the execution of the laws; and they are ſo far independent of the legiſlative, that they know the legiſlative only through the laws, and cannot be controlled or directed by it, through any other medium.

In what manner this ſuperintending authority ſhall be appointed or compoſed, is a matter that falls within the province of opinion. Some may prefer one method and ſome another; and in all caſes, where opinion only and not principle is concerned, the majority of opinions forms the rule for all. There are however ſome things deducible from reaſon, and evidenced by experience, that ſerve to guide our deciſion upon the caſe. The one is, never to inveſt any individual with extraordinary power; for beſides his being tempted to miſuſe it, it will excite contention and commotion in the nation for the office. Secondly, never to inveſt power long in the hands of any number of individuals. The inconveniences that may be ſuppoſed to accompany frequent changes, are leſs to be feared than the danger that ariſes from long continuance.

I ſhall conclude this diſcourſe with offering ſome obſervations on the means of *preſerving liberty*; for it is not only neceſſary that we eſtabliſh it, but that we preſerve it.

It is, in the firſt place, neceſſary that we diſtinguiſh between the

means made uſe of to overthrow deſpotiſm, in order to prepare the way for the eſtabliſhment of liberty, and the means to be uſed after deſpotiſm is overthrown.

The means made uſe of in the firſt caſe are juſtified by neceſſity. Thoſe means are, in general, inſurrections; for whilſt the eſtabliſhed government of deſpotiſm continues in any country, it is ſcarcely poſſible that any other means can be uſed. It is alſo certain that in the commencement of a revolution, the revolutionary party permit to themſelves a *diſcretionary exerciſe of power* regulated more by circumſtances than by principle, which were the practice to continue, liberty would never be eſtabliſhed, or if eſtabliſhed would ſoon be overthrown. It is never to be expected in a revolution that every man is to change his opinion at the ſame moment. There never yet was any truth or any principle ſo irreſiſtibly obvious, that all men believed it at once. Time and reaſon muſt co-operate with each other to the final eſtabliſhment of any principle; and therefore thoſe who may happen to be firſt convinced have not a right to perſecute others, on whom conviction operates more ſlowly. The moral principle of revolutions is to inſtruct; not to deſtroy.

Had a conſtitution been eſtabliſhed two years ago (as ought to have been done) the violences that have ſince deſolated France and injured the character of the revolution, would, in my opinion, have been prevented. The nation would then have had a bond of union, and every individual would have known the line of conduct he was to follow. But inſtead of this, a revolutionary government, a thing without either principle or authority, was ſubſtituted in its place; virtue and crime depended upon accident; and that which was patriotiſm one day became treaſon the next. All theſe things have followed from the want of a conſtitution; for it is the nature and intention of a conſtitution to *prevent governing by party*, by eſtabliſhing a common principle that ſhall limit and control the power and impulſe of party, and that ſays to all parties, THUS FAR SHALT THOU GO AND NO FURTHER. But in the abſence of a conſtitution men look entirely to party; and inſtead of principle governing party, party governs principle.

An avidity to puniſh is always dangerous to liberty. It leads men to ſtretch, to miſinterpret, and to miſapply even the beſt of laws. He that would make his own liberty ſecure, muſt guard even his enemy from oppreſſion; for if he violates this duty, he eſtabliſhes a precedent that will reach to himſelf.

THOMAS PAINE.

LETTER

TO

MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS.

SIR, LONDON, JUNE 6, 1792.

AS you opened the debate in the houſe of commons, May 25th, on the proclamation for ſuppreſſing publications, which that proclamation (without naming any) calls wicked and ſeditious; and as you applied thoſe opprobrious epithets to the works entitled *Rights of Man*, I think it unneceſſary to offer any other reaſon for addreſſing this letter to you.

I begin, then, at once, by declaring, that I do not believe there are to be found in the writings of any author, ancient or modern, on the ſubject of government, a ſpirit of greater benignity, and a ſtronger inculcation of moral principles than in thoſe which I have publiſhed. They come, Sir, from a man, who, by having lived in different countries, and under different ſyſtems of government, aud who, being intimate in the conſtruction of them, is a better judge of the ſubject than it is poſſible that you, from the want of thoſe opportunities can be:—and beſides this, they come from a heart that knows not how to beguile.

I will further ſay, that when that moment arrives in which the beſt conſolation that ſhall be left will be that of looking back on ſome paſt actions, more virtuous, more meritorious than the reſt, I ſhall then with happineſs remember, among other things, I have written the *Rights of Man*.—As to what proclamations, or proſecutions, or placemen, or place expectants—thoſe who poſſeſs, or thoſe who are gaping for office, may ſay of them, it will not alter their character, either with the world or with me.

Having, ſir, made this declaration, I ſhall proceed to remark, not particularly upon your own ſpeech on that occaſion, but on any other ſpeech to which your motion on that day gave riſe; and I ſhall begin with that of Mr. Adam:

This gentleman accuſes me of not having done the very thing, that I have done, and which (he ſays) if I had done, he ſhould not have accuſed me.

Mr. Adam, in his ſpeech (ſee the Morning Chronicle of May 26), ſays, "That he had well conſidered the ſubject of conſtitutional publications, and was by no means ready to ſay (but the contrary) that books of ſcience upon government though recommending a doctrine, or ſyſtem different from the form of our conſtitution (meaning that of England), were fit objects of proſecution; that if he did, he muſt condemn (which he meant not to do) Harrington for his Oceana, Sir Thomas More for his Eutopia, and Hume for his Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth. But (continued Mr. Adam) the publication of Mr. Paine was very different, for it reviled what was moſt ſacred in the conſtitution, deſtroyed every principle of ſubordination, and eſtabliſhed nothing in their room."

I readily perceived that Mr. Adam had not read the ſecond part of the Rights of Man, and I am put under the neceſſity either of ſubmitting to an erroneous charge, or of juſtifying myſelf againſt it: and I certainly ſhall prefer the latter.—If, then, I ſhall prove to Mr. Adam, that in my reaſoning upon ſyſtems of government, in the ſecond part of Rights of Man, I have ſhewn, as clearly, I think, as words can convey ideas, a certain ſyſtem of government; and that not exiſting in theory only, but already in full and eſtabliſhed practice, and ſyſtematically and practically free from all the vices and defects of the Engliſh government, and capable of producing more happineſs to the people, and that alſo with an eightieth part of the taxes, which the preſent ſyſtem of Engliſh government conſumes; I hope he will do me the juſtice when he next goes to the houſe to get up and confeſs, he had been miſtaken in ſaying, that I had eſtabliſhed nothing, and that I had deſtroyed every principle of ſubordination. Having thus opened the caſe, I now come to the point.

In the ſecond part of Rights of Man I have diſtinguiſhed government into two claſſes or ſyſtems; the one the hereditary ſyſtem, the other the repreſentative ſyſtem.

In the firſt part of Rights of Man I have endeavoured to ſhew, and I challenge any man to refute it, that there does not exiſt a right to eſtabliſh hereditary government; or, in other words, hereditary governors; becauſe hereditary government always means a government yet to come, and the caſe always is, that the people who are to live afterwards have always the ſame right to chooſe a government for themſelves, as the people had who lived before them.

In the ſecond part of Rights of Man I have not repeated thoſe arguments, becauſe they are irrefutable; but have confined myſelf to ſhew the defects of what is called hereditary government, or heredi-

tary ſucceſſion, that it muſt, from the nature of it, throw government into the hands of men totally unworthy of it, from want of principle, or unfitted for it from want of capacity.—James IId. is recorded as an inſtance of the firſt of theſe caſes; and inſtances are to be found almoſt all over Europe to prove the truth of the latter.

To ſhew the abſurdity of the hereditary ſyſtem ſtill more ſtrongly, I will now put the following caſe:—take any fifty men promiſcuouſly, and it will be very extraordinary if, out of that number, more than one man ſhould be found, whoſe principles and talents taken together (or ſome might have principles, and others have talents) would render him a perſon truly fitted to fill any very extraordinary office of national truſt. If then ſuch a fitneſs of character could not be expected to be found in more than one perſon out of fifty, it would happen but once in a thouſand years to the eldeſt ſon of any one family, admitting each on an average, to hold the office twenty years. Mr. Adam talks of ſomething in the conſtitution which he calls moſt ſacred; but I hope he does not mean hereditary ſucceſſion, a thing which appears to me a violation of every order of nature and of common ſenſe.

When I look into hiſtory and ſee the multitudes of men, otherwiſe virtuous, who have died, and their families been ruined, in defence of knaves and fools, and which they would not have done had they reaſoned at all upon the ſyſtem; I do not know a greater good that an individual can render to mankind, than to endeavour to break the chains of political ſuperſtition. Thoſe chains are now diſſolving faſt, and proclamations and proſecutions will ſerve but to haſten that diſſolution.

Having thus ſpoken of the hereditary ſyſtem as a bad ſyſtem, and ſubject to every poſſible defect, I now come to the repreſentative ſyſtem; and this Mr. Adam will find ſtated in the ſecond part of Rights of Man, not only as the beſt, but as the only theory of government under which the liberties of a people can be permanently ſecure.

But it is needleſs now to talk of mere theory, ſince there is already a government in full practice, eſtabliſhed upon that theory; or, in other words, upon the rights of man, and has been ſo for almoſt twenty years. Mr. Pitt, in a ſpeech of his ſome ſhort time ſince, ſaid 'That there never did, and never could exiſt a government eſtabliſhed upon thoſe rights, and that if it began at noon, it would end at night.'—Mr. Pitt has not yet arrived at the degree of a ſchool boy in this ſpecies of knowledge. His practice has been confined to the means of extorting revenue, and his boaſt has been—how much?

Whereas the boaſt of the ſyſtem of government that I am ſpeaking of, is not how much, but how little.

The ſyſtem of government purely repreſentative, unmixed with any thing of hereditary nonſenſe, began in America. I will now compare the effects of that ſyſtem of government, with the ſyſtem of government in England, both during and ſince the cloſe of the war.

So powerful is the repreſentative ſyſtem;—firſt, by combining and conſolidating all the parts of a country together, however great the extent; and ſecondly, by admitting of none but men properly qualified into the government, or diſmiſſing them if they prove otherwiſe, that America was enabled thereby totally to defeat and overthrow all the ſchemes and projects of the hereditary government of England againſt her. As the eſtabliſhment of the revolution and independence of America is a proof of this fact, it is needleſs to enlarge upon it.

I now come to the comparative effect of the two ſyſtems ſince the cloſe of the war, and I requeſt Mr. Adam to attend to it.

America had internally ſuſtained the ravage of upwards of ſeven years of war, which England had not. England ſuſtained only the expence of the war: whereas America ſuſtained, not only the expence, but the deſtruction of property committed by both armies. Not a houſe was built during that period, and many thouſands were deſtroyed. The farms and plantations along the coaſt of the country, for more than a thouſand miles, were laid waſte. Her commerce was annihilated. Her ſhips were either taken or had rotted within her own harbours. The credit of her funds had fallen upwards of ninety per cent. that is, an original hundred pounds would not ſell for ten pounds. In fine, ſhe was apparently put back an hundred years when the war cloſed; which was not the caſe with England.

But ſuch was the event, that the ſame repreſentative ſyſtem of government, though ſince better organized, which enabled her to conquer enabled her alſo to recover, and ſhe now preſents a more flouriſhing condition, and a more happy and harmonized ſociety under that ſyſtem of government, than any country in the world can boaſt under any other. Her towns are re-built much better than before; her farms and plantations are in higher improvement than ever; her commerce is ſpread over the world, and her funds have riſen from leſs than ten pounds the hundred to upwards of one hundred and twenty. Mr. Pitt and his colleagues, talk of the things that have happened in his boyiſh adminiſtration, without knowing what greater things have happened elſewhere, and under other ſyſtems of government.

I next come to ſtate the expence of the two ſyſtems, as they now ſtand in each of the countries; but it may firſt be proper to obſerve, that government in America is what it ought to be, a matter of honour and truſt, and not made a trade of for the purpoſe of lucre.

The whole amount of the nett taxes in England (excluſive of the expence of collections, of drawbacks, of ſeizures and condemnations, of fines and penalties, of fees of office, of litigations and informers, which are ſome of the bleſſed means of enforcing them) is, ſeventeen millions. Of this ſum, about nine millions go for the payment of the intereſt of the national debt, and the remainder, being about eight millions, is for the current annual expences. Thus much for one ſide of the caſe. I now come to the other.

The expence of all the ſeveral departments of the general repreſentative government of the United States of America, extending over a ſpace of country nearly ten times larger than England, is two hundred and ninety-four thouſand five hundred and fifty eight dollars, which at 4s. 6d. per dollar, is 66,275l. 11s. ſterling, and is thus apportioned:

	£.	s.
Expence of the executive department.		
The office of preſidency, at which the preſident receives nothing for himſelf.	5,625	0
Vice-preſident	1,125	0
Chief juſtice	900	0
Five aſſociates juſtices	3,937	10
Nineteen judges of diſtrict and attorney-general	6,873	15
Legiſlative department.		
Members of congreſs at 6 dols. (1l. 7s.) per day, their ſecretaries, clerks, chaplains, meſſengers, door-keepers, &c.	25,515	0
Treaſury department.		
Secretary, aſſiſtant, comptroller, auditor, treaſurer, regiſter, and loan-office keeper in each ſtate, together with all neceſſary clerks, office keepers, &c.	12,825	0
Department of ſtate, including foreign affairs.		
Secretary, clerks, &c. &c.	1,406	5
Department of war.		
Secretary, clerks, paymaſters, commiſſioner, &c.	1,462	10
Commiſſioners for ſettling old accounts.		
The whole board, clerks, &c.	2,598	15

Incidental and contingent expences.	£.	s.
For fire-wood, ſtationary, printing, &c.	4,036	18
Total, £.66,275		11

On account of the incurſions of the Indians on the back ſettlements, congreſs is at this time obliged to keep ſix thouſand militia in pay, in addition to a regiment of foot, and a battalion of artillery, which it always keeps; and this increaſes the expence of the war-department to 390,000 dollars, which is 87,795l. ſterling, but when peace ſhall be concluded with the Indians, the greateſt part of this expence will ceaſe, and the total amount of the expence of government, including that of the army, will not amount to one hundred thouſand pounds ſterling, which, as has been already ſtated, is but an eightieth part of the expences of the Engliſh government.

I requeſt Mr. Adam and Mr. Dundas, and all thoſe who are talking of conſtitutions, and bleſſings, and kings, and lords, and the Lord know what, to look at this ſtatement. Here is a form and ſyſtem of government, that is better organized and better adminiſtered than any government in the world, and that for leſs than one hundred thouſand pounds per annum, and yet every member of congreſs receives, as a compenſation for his time and attendance on public buſineſs, one pound ſeven ſhillings per day, which is at the rate of nearly five hundred pounds a year.

This is a government that has nothing to fear. It needs no proclamations to deter people from writing and reading. It needs no political ſuperſtition to ſupport it. It was by encouraging diſcuſſion and rendering the preſs free upon all ſubjects of government, that the principles of government became underſtood in America, and the people are now enjoying the preſent bleſſings under it. You hear of no riots, tumults and diſorders in that country; becauſe their exiſts no cauſe to produce them.—Thoſe things are never the effect of freedom, but of reſtraint, oppreſſion and exceſſive taxation.

In America, there is not that claſs of poor and wretched people that are ſo numerouſly diſperſed all over England, who are to be told by a proclamation, that they are happy; and this is in a great meaſure to be accounted for, not by the difference of proclamations, but by the difference of governments and the difference of taxes between that country and this. What the labouring people of that country earn, they apply to their own uſe, and to the education of their children, and do not pay it away in taxes as faſt as they earn it,

to support court extravagance, and a long enormous list of placemen and pensioners; and besides this, they have learned the manly doctrine of reverencing themselves, and consequently of respecting each other; and they laugh at those imaginary beings called kings and lords, and all the fraudulent trumpery of courts.

When placemen and pensioners, or those who expect to be such, are lavish in praise of a government, it is not a sign of its being a good one. The pension-list alone in England (see Sir John Sinclair's History of the Revenue, page six of the Appendix) is one hundred and seven thousand four hundred and four pounds, which is more than the expences of the whole government of America amount to; and I am now more convinced than before, that the offer that was made to me of a thousand pounds for the copy-right of the second part of Rights of Man, together with the remaining copy-right of the first part, was to have effected, by a quick suppression, what is now attempted to be done by a prosecution. The connection which the person who made that offer has with the king's printing-office, may furnish part of the means of enquiring into this affair, when the ministry shall please to bring their prosecution to issue.—But to return to my subject.

I have said, in the second part of Rights of Man, and I repeat it here, that the service of any man, whether called king, president, senator, legislator or any thing else, cannot be worth more to any country, in the regular rotine of office, than ten thousand pounds per annum. We have a better man in America, and more of a gentleman than any king I ever knew of, who does not occasion even half that expence; for though the salary is fixed at 5625l. he does not accept it, and it is only the incidental expences that are paid out of it. The name by which a man is called is, of itself, but an empty thing. It is worth and character alone which can render him valuable, for without this, kings and lords, and presidents, are but jingling names.

But without troubling myself about constitutions of government I have shewn in the second part of Rights of Man, that an alliance may be formed between England, France and America, and that the expences of government in England may be put back to one million and a half, viz.

Civil expence of government, - -	£.500,000
Army, - - -	500,000
Navy, - - - -	500,000
	£.1,500,000

And even this ſum is fifteen times greater than the expences of government are in America; and it is alſo greater than the whole peace eſtabliſhment of England amounted to, about an hundred years ago. So much has the weight and oppreſſion of taxes encreaſed ſince the revolution, and eſpecially ſince the year 1714.

To ſhew that the ſum of 500,000l. is ſufficient to defray all the civil expences of government, I have, in that work annexed the following eſtimate for any country of the ſame extent as England.

In the firſt place three hundred repreſentatives, fairly elected, are ſufficient for all the purpoſes to which legiſlation can apply, and preferable to a larger number.

If then an allowance, at the rate of five hundred pounds per annum be made to every repreſentative, deducting for non-attendance, the expence, if the whole number attended ſix months each year, would be - - - £. 75,000

The official departments could not poſſibly exceed the following number, with the ſalaries annexed, viz.

Three officers,	at	10,000l.	each,	30,000
Ten ditto,	at	5,000l.	each,	50,000
Twenty ditto,	at	2,000l.	each,	40,000
Forty ditto,	at	1,000l.	each.	40,000
Two hundred ditto,	at	500l.	each,	100,000
Three hundred ditto,	at	200l.	each,	60,000
Five hundred ditto,	at	100l.	each,	50,000
Seven hundred ditto,	at	75l.	each,	52,000
				£. 497,500

If a nation choſe, it might deduct four per cent. from all the offices, and make one of twenty thouſand pounds per annum, and ſtyle the perſon who would fill it, king or majeſty, or give him any other title.

Taking, however, this ſum of one million and an half, as an abundant ſupply for all the expences of government under any form whatever, there will remain a ſurplus of nearly ſix million and a half out of the preſent taxes, after paying the intereſt of the national debt; and I have ſhewn in the ſecond part of Rights of Man what appears to me, the beſt mode of applying the ſurplus money; for I am now ſpeaking of expences and ſavings, and not of ſyſtems of government.

I have in the firſt place, eſtimated the poor rates at two millions annually, and ſhewn that the firſt effectual ſtep would be to aboliſh

the poor rates entirely (which would be a ſaving of two millions to the houſekeepers), and to remit four millions out of the ſurplus taxes to the poor, to be paid to them in money in proportion to the number of children in each family, and the number of aged perſons.

I have eſtimated the number of perſons of both ſexes in England of fifty years of age and upwards at 420,000, and have taken one third of this number, viz. 140,000 to be poor people.

To ſave long calculations, I have taken 70,000 of them to be fifty years of age, and under ſixty; and the other to be ſixty years and upwards; and to allow ſix pounds per annum to the former claſs, and ten pounds per annum to the latter. The expence of which will be,

	£.
Seventy thouſand perſons at 6l. per annum,	420,000
Seventy thouſand perſons at 10l. per annum,	700,000
	£.1,120,000

There will then remain of the four millions 2,880,000l. I have ſtated two different methods of appropriating this money. The one is to pay it in proportion to the number of children in each family at the rate of three or four pounds per annum for each child; the other is, to apportion it according to the expence of living in different counties: but in either of theſe caſes it would together with the allowance to be made to the aged, completely take off taxes from one third of all the families in England, beſides relieving all the other families from the burden of poor rates.

The whole number of families in England, lotting five ſouls to each family, is one million four hundred thouſand, of which take one third, viz. 466,666 to be poor families who now pay four millions of taxes, and that the pooreſt pays at leaſt four guineas a year; and that the other thirteen millions are paid by the other two thirds. The plan, therefore, as ſtated in the work is firſt, to remit or pay, as is already ſtated, this ſum of four millions to the poor, becauſe it is impoſſible to ſeparate them from the others in the preſent mode of collecting taxes on articles of conſumption: and, ſecondly, to aboliſh the poor rates, the houſe and window-light tax, and to change the commutation tax into a progreſſive tax, on large eſtates, the particulars of all which are ſet forth in the work.

I will conclude this part of my letter with an extract from the ſecond part of Rights of Man, which Mr. Dundas (a man rolling in luxury at the expence of the nation) has branded with the epithet of "wicked."

" By the operation of this plan, the poor laws, thoſe inſtruments of civil torture, will be ſuperceded, and the waſteful expence of litigation prevented. The hearts of the humane will not be ſhocked by ragged and hungry children, and perſons of ſeventy and eighty years of age, begging for bread. The dying poor will not be dragged from place to place, to breathe their laſt, as a reprieſal of pariſh upon pariſh. Widows will have a maintenance for their children, and not be carted away, on the death of their huſbands, like culprits and criminals, and children will no longer be conſidered as increaſing the diſtreſſes of their parents. The haunts of the wretched will be known, becauſe it will be to their advantage, and the number of petty crimes, the offspring of poverty and diſtreſs, will be leſſened. The poor, as well as the rich, will then be intereſted in the ſupport of government, and the cauſe and apprehenſion of riots and tumults will ceaſe. Ye, who ſit in eaſe, and ſolace yourſelves in plenty, and ſuch there are in Turkey and Ruſſia, as well as in England, and who ſay to yourſelves, *are we not well off?* have ye thought of theſe things? when ye do, ye will ceaſe to ſpeak and feel for yourſelves alone.

—— Rights of Man, Part II.

After this remiſſion of four millions be made, and the poor rates and houſes and window-light tax be aboliſhed, and the commutation tax changed, there will ſtill remain nearly one million and an half of ſurplus taxes; and as by an alliance between England and France and America, armies and navies will in a great meaſure, be rendered unneceſſary, and as men who have either been brought up in, or long habited to, thoſe lines of life, are ſtill citizens of a nation in common with the reſt, and have a right to participate in all plans of national benefit, it is ſtated in that work (Rights of Man, Part II.) to apply annually 507,000l. out of the ſurplus taxes to this purpoſe in the following manner:

	£.
To fifteen thouſand diſbanded ſoldiers, 3s. per week, clear of deductions, during life	117,000
Additional pay to the remaining ſoldiers per annum,	19,500
To the officers of the diſbanded corps, during life, the ſum of	117,000
To fifteen thouſand diſbanded ſailors, 3s. per week during life,	117,000
Additional pay to the remaining ſailors,	19,500
To the officers of the diſbanded part of the navy, during life,	117,000
	£.507,000

The limits to which it is proper to confine this letter, will not admit of my entering into further particulars. I addreſs it to Mr. Dundas becauſe he took the lead in the debate, and he wiſhes, I ſuppoſe, to appear conſpicuous; but the purport of it is to juſtify myſelf from the charge which Mr. Adam has made.

This gentleman, as has been obſerved in the beginning of this letter, conſiders the writings of Harrington, More and Hume, as juſtifiable and legal publications, becauſe they reaſoned by compariſon, though in ſo doing they ſhewed plans and ſyſtems of government, not only different from but preferable to that of England, and he accuſes me of endeavouring to confuſe, inſtead of producing a ſyſtem in the room of that which I had reaſoned by compariſon of the repreſentative ſyſtem againſt the hereditary ſyſtem; but I have gone further; for I have produced an inſtance of a government eſtabliſhed entirely on the repreſentative ſyſtem, under which greater happineſs is enjoyed, much fewer taxes required, and much higher credit is eſtabliſhed, than under the ſyſtem of government in England. The funds in England have ariſen ſince the war only, from 54l. to 97l. and they have been down, ſince the proclamation to 87l. whereas the funds in America, roſe in the mean time from 10l. to 120l.

His charge againſt me of, "deſtroying every principle of ſubordination," is equally as groundleſs, which even a ſingle paragraph from the work will prove, and which I ſhall here quote:

"Formerly, when diviſions aroſe reſpecting government, recourſe was had to the ſword, and a civil war enſued. That ſavage cuſtom is exploded by the new ſyſtem, and recourſe is had to a national convention. Diſcuſſion, and the general will, arbitrates the queſtion, and to this private opinion yields with a good grace, and order is preſerved uninterrupted."

——Rights of Man, Part. II.

That two different charges ſhould be brought at the ſame time, the one by a member of the legiſlature, for not doing a certain thing, and the other by the attorney-general for doing it, is a ſtrange jumble of contradiction. I have now juſtified myſelf, or the work rather, againſt the firſt by ſtating the caſe in this letter, and the juſtification of the other will be undertaken in its proper place. But in any caſe the work will go on.

I ſhall now conclude this letter, with ſaying that the only objection I found againſt the plan and principles contained in the ſecond part of the Rights of Man when I had written the book was that they would beneficially intereſt at leaſt ninety-nine perſons out

of every hundred throughout the nation, and therefore would not leave sufficient room for men to act from the direct and disinterested principles of honour; but the prosecution now commenced has fortunately removed that objection, and the approvers and protectors of that work now feel the immediate impulse of honour, added to that of national interest.

I am, Mr. DUNDAS,

Not your obedient humble servant,

But to the contrary,

THOMAS PAINE

THE

DECLINE AND FALL

OF THE

ENGLISH SYSTEM OF FINANCE.

"On the verge, nay even in the gulph of bankruptcy."

DEBATES IN PARLIAMENT.

NOTHING, they ſay, is more certain than death, and nothing more uncertain than the time of dying; yet we can always fix a period beyond which man cannot live, and within ſome moment of which he will die. We are enabled to do this, not by any ſpirit of prophecy, or foreſight into the event, but by obſervation of what has happened in all caſes of human or animal exiſtence. If then any other ſubject, ſuch, for inſtance, as a ſyſtem of finance, exhibits in its progreſs a ſeries of ſymptoms indicating decay, its final diſſolution is certain, and the period of it can be calculated from the ſymptoms it exhibits.

Thoſe who have hitherto written on the Engliſh ſyſtem of finance (the funding ſyſtem), have been uniformly impreſſed with the idea of its downfal happening *ſome time or other*. They took, however, no data for that opinion, but expreſſed it predictively, or merely as opinion, from a conviction that the perpetual duration of ſuch a ſyſtem was a natural impoſſibility. It is in this manner that Doctor Price has ſpoken of it; and Smith, in his Wealth of Nations, has ſpoken in the ſame manner; that is, merely as opinion without data. "The progreſs," ſays Smith, "of the enormous debts, which "at preſent oppreſs, and will in the long-run *moſt probably ruin*, all "the great nations of Europe (he ſhould have ſaid *governments*), "has been pretty uniform." But this general manner of ſpeaking, though it might make ſome impreſſion, carried with it no conviction.

It is not my intention to predict any thing; but I will ſhew from data already known, from ſymptons and facts which the Engliſh

funding ſyſtem has already exhibited publicly, that it will not continue to the end of Mr. Pitt's life, ſuppoſing him to live the uſual age of a man. How much ſooner it may fail, I leave to others to predict.

Let financiers diverſify ſyſtems of credit as they will, it is nevertheleſs true, that every ſyſtem of credit is a ſyſtem of paper money. Two experiments have already been had upon paper money; the one in America; the other in France. In both thoſe caſes the whole capital was emitted, and that whole capital, which in America was called continental money, and in France aſſignats, appeared in circulation; the conſequence of which was that the quantity became ſo enormous, and ſo diſproportioned to the quantity of population, and to the quantity of objects upon which it could be employed, that the market, if I may ſo expreſs it, was glutted with it, and the value of it fell. Between five and ſix years determined the fate of thoſe experiments. The ſame fate would have happened to gold and ſilver, could gold and ſilver have been iſſued in the ſame abundant manner as paper had been, and confined within the country as paper money always is, by having no circulation out of it; or to ſpeak on a larger ſcale, the ſame thing would happen in the world, could the world be glutted with gold and ſilver, as America and France has been with paper.

The Engliſh ſyſtem differs from that of America and France in this one particular, that its capital is kept out of ſight; that is, it does not appear in circulation. Were the whole capital of the national debt, which at the time I write this is almoſt four hundred million pounds ſterling, to be emitted in aſſignats or bills, and that whole quantity put into circulation, as was done in America and in France, thoſe Engliſh aſſignats, or bills, would ſoon ſink in value as thoſe of America and France have done; and that in a greater degree, becauſe the quantity of them would be more diſproportioned to the quantity of population in England, than was the caſe in either of the other two countries. A nominal pound ſterling in ſuch bills would not be worth one penny.

But though the Engliſh ſyſtem, by thus keeping the capital out of ſight, is preſerved from haſty deſtruction, as in the caſe of America and France, it nevertheleſs approaches the ſame fate, and will arrive at it with the ſame certainty, though by a ſlower progreſs. The difference is altogether in the degree of ſpeed by which the two ſyſtems approach their fate, which, to ſpeak in round numbers, is as twenty is to one; that is, the Engliſh ſyſtem, that of

funding the capital inſtead of iſſuing it, contained within itſelf a capacity of enduring twenty times longer than the ſyſtems adopted by America and France; and at the end of that time it would arrive at the ſame common grave, the Potter's Field, of paper money.

The datum, I take for this propoſition of twenty to one, is the difference between a capital and the intereſt at five per cent. Twenty times the intereſt is equal to the capital. The accumulation of paper money in England is in proportion to the accumulation of the intereſt upon every new loan; and therefore the progreſs to the diſſolution is twenty times ſlower than if the capital were to be emitted and put into circulation immediately. Every twenty years in the Engliſh ſyſtem is equal to one year in the French and American ſyſtems.

Having thus ſtated the duration of the two ſyſtems, that of funding upon intereſt, and that of emitting the whole capital without funding, to be as twenty to one, I come to examine the ſymptoms of decay, approaching to diſſolution, that the Engliſh ſyſtem has already exhibited, and to compare them with ſimilar ſyſtems in the French and American ſyſtems.

The Engliſh funding ſyſtem began one hundred years ago; in which time there has been ſix wars, including the war that ended in 1697.

1. The war that ended, as I have juſt ſaid, in 1697.
2. The war that began in 1702.
3. The war that began in 1739.
4. The war that began in 1756.
5. The American war, that began in 1775.
6. The preſent war, that began in 1793.

The national debt, at the concluſion of the war, which ended in 1697, was twenty one millions and an half. (See Smith's Wealth of Nations, chapter on Public Debts.) We now ſee it approaching faſt to four hundred millions. If between theſe two extremes of twenty-one millions and four hundred millions, embracing the ſeveral expences of all the including wars, there exiſts ſome common ratio that will aſcertain arithmetically the amount of the debts at the end of each war, as certainly as the fact is now known to be, that ratio will in like manner determine what the amount of the debt will be in all future wars, and will aſcertain the period within which the funding ſyſtem will expire in a bankruptcy of the government; for the ratio I allude to is the ratio which the nature of the thing has eſtabliſhed for itſelf.

Hitherto no idea has been entertained that any ſuch ratio exiſted, or could exiſt, that could determine a problem of this kind, that is,

that could aſcertain, without having any knowledge of the fact, what the expence of any former war had been, or what the expence of any future war would be; but it is nevertheleſs true that ſuch a ratio does exiſt, as I ſhall ſhew, and alſo the mode of applying it.

The ratio I allude to is not in arithmetical progreſſion like the numbers

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9;

nor yet in geometrical progreſſion, like the numbers

2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256;

but is in the ſeries of one half upon each preceding number; like the numbers

8, 12, 18, 27, 40, 60, 90, 135.

Any perſon can perceive that the ſecond number, 12, is produced by the preceding number, 8, and half 8; and that the third number, 18, is in like manner produced by the preceding number, 12, and half 12; and ſo on for the reſt. They can alſo ſee how rapidly the ſums increaſe as the ratio proceeds. The difference between the two firſt numbers is but four; but the difference between the two laſt is forty-five: and from thence they may ſee with what immenſe rapidity the national debt has increaſed, and will continue to increaſe, till it exceeds the ordinary powers of calculation, and loſes itſelf in cyphers.

I come now to apply the ratio as a rule to determine all the caſes.

I began with the war that ended in 1697, which was the war in which the funding ſyſtem began. The expence of that war was twenty-one millions and an half. In order to aſcertain the expence of the next war, I add to twenty-one millions and an half, the half thereof (ten millions and three quarters), which makes thirty-two millions and a quarter for the expence of that war. This thirty-two millions and a quarter, added to the former debt of twenty-one millions and an half, carries the national debt to fifty-three millions and three quarters. Smith, in his chapter on Public Debts, ſays, the national debt was at this time fifty-three millions.

I proceed to aſcertain the expence of the next war, that of 1739, by adding, as in the former caſe one half to the expence of the preceding war. The expence of the preceding war was thirty-two millions and a quarter; for the ſake of even numbers, ſay thirty-two millions; the half of which (16) makes forty-eight millions for the expence of that war.

I proceed to aſcertain the expence of the war of 1756, by adding, according to the ratio, one half to the expence of the preceding war. The expence of the preceding war was taken at 48 millions the half of which (24) makes 72 millions for the expence of that war. Smith

(chapter on Public Debts) fays, the expence of the war 1756 was 72 millions and a quarter.

I proceed to aſcertain the expence of the American war, of 1775, by adding, as in the former caſes, one half to the expence of the preceding war. The expence of the preceding war was 72 millions, the half of (36) makes 108 millions for the expence of that war. In the laſt edition of Smith (chapter on Public Debts) he ſays, the expence of the American war was *more than an hundred millions*.

I come now to aſcertain the expence of the preſent war, ſuppoſing it to continue as long as former wars have done, and the funding ſyſtem not to break up before that period. The expence of the preceding war was 108 millions, the half of which (54) makes 162 millions for the expence of the preſent war. It gives ſymptons of going beyond this ſum, ſuppoſing the funding ſyſtem not to break up; for the loans of the laſt year and of the preſent year, are twenty-two millions each, which exceeds the ratio compared with the loans of the preceding war. It will not be from the inability of procuring loans that the ſyſtem will break up. On the contrary, it is the facility with which loans can be procured, that haſtens that event. The loans are altogether paper tranſactions; and it is the exceſs of them that brings on, with accelerating ſpeed, that progreſſive depreciation of funded paper money that will diſſolve the funding ſyſtem.

I proceed to aſcertain the expence of future wars, and I do this merely to ſhew the impoſſibility of the continuance of the funding ſyſtem, and the certainty of its diſſolution.

The expence of the next war after the preſent war, according to the ratio that has aſcertained the preceding caſes will be — 243 millions

Expence of the ſecond war	— 364
——————— third war	— 546
——————— fourth war	— 819
——————— fifth war	— 1228
	3200 millions

which, at only 4 per cent, will require taxes to the nominal amount of one hundred twenty-eight millions to pay the annual intereſt, beſides the intereſt of the preſent debt, and the expences of government, which are not included in this account. Is there a man ſo mad, ſo ſtupid, as to ſuppoſe this ſyſtem can continue?

When I firſt conceived the idea of ſeeking for ſome common ratio that ſhould apply as a rule of meaſurement to all the caſes of the funding ſyſtem, ſo far as to aſcertain the ſeveral ſtages of its approach

to diſſolution, I had no expectation that any ratio could be found that would apply with ſo much exactneſs as this does. I was led to the idea merely by obſerving that the funding ſyſtem was a thing in continual progreſſion, and that whatever was in a ſtate of progreſſion might be ſuppoſed to admit of, at leaſt, ſome general ratio of meaſurement, that would apply without any very great variation. But who could have ſuppoſed that falling ſyſtems, or falling opinions, admitted of a ratio apparently as true as the deſcent of falling bodies I have not *made* the ratio, any more than Newton made the ratio of gravitation. I have only diſcovered it, and explained the mode of applying it.

To ſhew at one view the rapid progreſſion of the funding ſyſtem to deſtruction, and to expoſe the folly of thoſe who blindly believe in its continuance, or who artfully endeavour to impoſe that belief upon others, I exhibit in the annexed table, the expence of each of the ſix wars ſince the funding ſyſtem began, as aſcertained by the ratio, and the expence of ſix wars yet to come, aſcertained by the ſame ratio.

FIRST SIX WARS.			SECOND SIX WARS.		
1	21 millions		1	243 millions	
2	33 millions		2	364 millions	
3	48 millions		3	546 millions	
4	72 millions*		4	819 millions	
5	108 millions		5	1228 millions	
6	162 millions		6	1842 millions	
Total	444		Total	5042 millions	

Thoſe who are acquainted with the power with which even a

* *The actual expence of the war of* 1739 *did not come up to the ſum aſcertained by the ratio. But as that which is the natural diſpoſition of a thing, as it is the natural diſpoſition of a ſtream of water to deſcend, will, if impeded in its courſes overcome by a new effort what it had loſt by that impediment, ſo it was with reſpect to this war and the next* (1756), *taken collectively; for the expence of the war* 1756 *reſtored the equilibrium of the ratio, as fully as if it had not been impeded. A circumſtance that ſerves to prove the truth of the ratio more fully than if the interruption had not taken place. The war of* 1739 *was languid: the efforts were below the value of money at that time: for the ratio is the meaſure of the depreciation of money in conſequence of the funding ſyſtem; or what comes to the ſame end, it is the meaſure of the increaſe of paper. Every additional quantity of it, whether in bank-notes or otherwiſe, diminiſhes the* real, *though not the* nominal, *value of the former quantity.*

ſmall ratio, acting in progreſſion, multiplies in a long ſeries, will ſee nothing to wonder at in this table. Thoſe who are not acquainted with that ſubject, and not knowing what elſe to ſay, may be inclined to deny it. But it is not their opinion one way, nor mine the other, that can influence the event. The table exhibits the natural march of the funding ſyſtem to its irredeemable diſſolution.—Suppoſing the preſent government of England to continue, and to go on as it has gone on ſince the funding ſyſtem began, I would not give twenty ſhillings for one hundred pounds in the funds to be paid twenty years hence. I do not ſpeak this predictively; I produce the data upon which that belief is founded: and which data it is every body's intereſt to know, who have any thing to do with the funds, or who are going to bequeath property to their deſcendants to be paid at a future day.

Perhaps it may be aſked, that as governments or miniſters proceeded by no ratio in making loans or incurring debts, and as nobody intended any ratio, or thought of any, how does it happen that there is one? I anſwer, that the ratio is founded in neceſſity; and I now go to explain what that neceſſity is.

It will always happen, that the price of labour, or of the produce of labour, be that produce what it may, will be in proportion to the quantity of money in a country, admitting things to take their natural courſe. Before the invention of the funding ſyſtem, there was no other money than gold, and ſilver; and, as nature gives out thoſe metals with a ſparing hand, and in regular annual quantities from the mines, the ſeveral prices of things were proportioned to the quantity of money at that time, and ſo nearly ſtationary as to vary but little in any fifty or ſixty years of that period.

When the funding ſyſtem began, a ſubſtitute for gold and ſilver began alſo. That ſubſtitute was paper; and the quantity of it increaſed as the quantity of intereſt increaſed upon accumulated loans. This appearance of a new and additional ſpecies of money in the nation ſoon began to break the relative value which money and the things it will purchaſe bore to each other before. Every thing roſe in price; but the riſe at firſt was little and ſlow, like the difference in units between the two firſt numbers, 8 and 12, compared with the two laſt numbers, 90 and 135, in the table. It was however ſufficient to make itſelf conſiderably felt in a large tranſaction. When therefore government, by engaging in a new war, required a new loan, it was obliged to make a higher loan than the former loan, to balance the increaſed price to which things had riſen; and as that new

loan increaſed the quantity of paper in proportion to the new quantity of intereſt, it carried the price of things ſtill higher than before. The next loan was again higher, to balance that further increaſed price; and all this in the ſame manner though not in the ſame degree, that every new emiſſion of continental money in America, or of aſſignats in France, were greater than the preceding emiſſion, to make head againſt the advance of prices, till the combat could be maintained no longer. Herein is founded the neceſſity of which I have juſt ſpoken. That neceſſity proceeds with accelerating velocity, and the ratio I have laid down is the meaſure of that acceleration; or, to ſpeak the technical language of the ſubject, it is the meaſure of the increaſing depreciation of funded paper money, which it is impoſſible to prevent, while the quantity of that money and of bank notes continues to multiply. What elſe but this can account for the difference between one war coſting 21 millions, and another war coſting 160 millions?

The difference cannot be accounted for on the ſcore of extraordinary efforts or extraordinary achievements. The war that coſt 21 millions was the war of the confederates, hiſtorically called the grand alliance, conſiſting of Englaud, Auſtria, and Holland, in the time of William the third, againſt Louis the Fourteenth, and in which the confederates were victorious. The preſent is a war of a much greater confederacy—a confederacy of England, Auſtria, Pruſſia, the German Empire, Spain, Holland, Naples, and Sardinia, eight powers againſt the French Republic ſingly, and the Republic has beaten the whole confederacy.—But to return to my ſubject.—

It is ſaid in England, that the value of paper keeps equal with the value of gold and ſilver. But the caſe is not rightly ſtated: for the fact is, that the paper has *pulled down* the value of gold and ſilver to level with itſelf. Gold and ſilver will not purchaſe ſo much of any purchaſable article at this day as if no paper had appeared, nor ſo much as it will in any country in Europe where there is no paper. How long this hanging together of money and paper will continue, makes a new caſe; becauſe it daily expoſes the ſyſtem to ſudden death, independent of the natural death it would otherwiſe ſuffer.

I conſider the funding ſyſtem as being now advanced into the laſt twenty years of its exiſtence. The ſingle circumſtance, were there no other, that a war ſhould now coſt *nominally* one hundred and ſixty millions, which when the ſyſtem began coſt but twenty-one millions, or that the loan for one year only (including the loan to the emperor) ſhould now be *nominally* greater than the whole expence

of that war ſhews the ſtate of depreciation to which the funding ſyſtem has arrived. Its depreciation is in the proportion of eight for one, compared with the value of its money when the ſyſtem began; which is the ſtate the French aſſignats ſtood a year ago (March 1795), compared with gold and ſilver. It is therefore that I ſay, that the Engliſh funding ſyſtem, has entered in the laſt twenty years of its exiſtence, comparing each twenty years of the Engliſh ſyſtem with every ſingle year of the American and French ſyſtems as before ſtated.

Again, ſuppoſing the preſent war to cloſe as former wars have done, and without producing either revolution or reform in England, another war, at leaſt, muſt be looked for in the ſpace of the twenty years I allude to; for it has never yet happened that twenty years have paſſed off without a war, and that more eſpecially ſince the Engliſh government has dabbled in German politics, and ſhewn a diſpoſition to inſult the world, and the world of commerce, with her navy. That next war will carry the national debt to very nearly ſeven hundred millions, the intereſt of which, at four per cent. will be twenty-eight millions beſides the taxes for the (then) expences of government, which will increaſe in the ſame proportion, and which will carry the taxes to at leaſt forty-millions; and if another war only begins, it will quickly carry them to above fifty; for it is in the laſt twenty years of the funding ſyſtem, as in the laſt year of the American and French ſyſtems without funding, that all the great ſhocks begin to operate.

I have juſt mentioned that paper, in England has *pulled down* the value of gold and ſilver to a level with itſelf; and that this *pulling down* of gold and ſilver money has created the appearance of paper money keeping up. The ſame thing, and the ſame miſtake, took place in America and in France, and continued for a conſiderable time after the commencement of their ſyſtem of paper; and the actual depreciation of money was hidden under that miſtake.

It was ſaid in America, at that time, that every thing was becoming *dear*; but gold and ſilver could then buy thoſe dear articles no cheaper than paper could; and therefore it was not called depreciation. The idea of *dearneſs* eſtabliſhed itſelf for the idea of depreciation. The ſame was the caſe in France. Though every thing roſe in price ſoon after aſſignats appeared, yet thoſe dear articles could be purchaſed no cheaper with gold and ſilver than with paper, and it was only ſaid that things were *dear*. The ſame is ſtill the language in

England. They called it *dearneſs*. But they will ſoon find that it is an actual depreciation, and that this depreciation is the effect of the funding ſyſtem; which, by crowding ſuch a continually-increaſing maſs of paper into circulation, carries down the value of gold and ſilver with it. But gold and ſilver will, in the long run, revolt againſt depreciation, and ſeparate from the value of paper; for the progreſs of all ſuch ſyſtems appears to be, that the paper will take the command in the beginning, and gold and ſilver in the end.

But this ſucceſſion in the command of gold and ſilver over paper, makes a criſis far more eventful to the funding ſyſtem than to any other ſyſtem upon which paper can be iſſued; for, ſtrictly ſpeaking, it is not a criſis of danger, but a ſympton of death. It is a death ſtroke to the funding ſyſtem. It is a revolution in the whole of its affairs.

If paper be iſſued without being funded upon intereſt, emiſſions of it can be continued after the value of it ſeparates from gold and ſilver, as we have ſeen in the two caſes of America and France. But the funding ſyſtem reſts altogether upon the value of paper being equal to gold and ſilver; which will be as long as the paper can continue carrying down the value of gold and ſilver to the ſame level to which itſelf deſcends, and no longer. But even in this ſtate, that of deſcending equally together, the miniſter, whoever he may be, will find himſelf beſet with accumulating difficulties; becauſe the loans and taxes voted for the ſervice of each enſuing year will wither in his hands before the year expires, or before they can be applied. This will force him to have recourſe to emiſſions of what are called exchequer and navy bills, which, by ſtill increaſing the maſs of paper in circulation, will drive on the depreciation ſtill more rapidly.

It ought to be known that taxes in England are not paid in gold and ſilver, but in paper (bank notes). Every perſon who pays any conſiderable quantity of taxes, ſuch as maltſters, brewers, diſtillers (I appeal for the truth of it to any of the collectors of exciſe in England, or to Mr. Whitebread), knows this to be the caſe. There is not gold and ſilver enough in the nation to pay the taxes in coin, as I ſhall ſhew; and conſequently there is not money enough in the bank to pay the notes. The intereſt of the national funded debt is paid at the bank in the ſame kind of paper in which the taxes are collected. When people find, as they will find, a reſervedneſs among each other in giving gold and ſilver for bank notes, or the leaſt preference for the former over the latter, they will go for payment to the bank, where they have a right to go. They will do this as a meaſure of

prudence, each one for himſelf, and the truth or deluſion of the funding ſyſtem will be then proved.

I have ſaid in the foregoing paragraph that there is not gold and ſilver enough in the nation to pay the taxes in coin, and conſequently that there cannot be enough in the bank to pay the notes. As I do not chooſe to reſt any thing upon aſſertion, I appeal for the truth of this to the publications of Mr. Eden (now called lord Auckland), and George Chalmers, ſecretary to the board of trade and plantation, of which Jenkinſon (now called Lord Hawkeſbury), is preſident. [Theſe ſort of folks change their names ſo often, that it is as difficult to know them as a thief]. Chalmers gives the quantity of gold and ſilver coin from the returns of coinage at the mint; and, after deducting for the light gold recoined, ſays, that the amount of gold and ſilver coin is *about twenty millions*. He had better not have proved this, eſpecially if he had reflected, that *public credit is ſuſpicion aſleep*. The quantity is much too little.

Of this twenty millions (which is not a fourth part of the quantity of gold and ſilver there is in France, as is ſhewn in Mr. Neckar's Treatiſe on the Adminiſtration of the Finances) three millions at leaſt muſt be ſuppoſed to be in Ireland, ſome in Scotland, and in the Weſt Indies, Newfoundland, &c. The quantity therefore in England cannot be more than 16 millions, which is four millions leſs than the amount of the taxes. But admitting there to be ſixteen millions, not more than a fourth part thereof (four millions) can be in London, when it is conſidered that every city, town, village, and farm-houſe in the nation muſt have a part of it, and that all the great manufactories, which moſt require caſh, are out of London. Of this four millions in London, every banker, merchant, tradeſman, in ſhort every individual muſt have ſome. He muſt be a poor ſhop-keeper indeed, who has not a few guineas in his till. The quantity of caſh therefore in the bank can never, on the evidence of circumſtance, be ſo much as two millions; moſt probably not more than one million; and on this ſlender twig, always liable to be broken, hangs the whole funding ſyſtem of four hundred millions, beſides many millions, in bank notes. The ſum in the bank is not ſufficient to pay one-fourth of only one year's intereſt of the national debt, were the creditors to demand payment in caſh, or to demand caſh for the bank-notes in which the intereſt is paid. A circumſtance always liable to happen.

One of the amuſements that has kept up the farce of the funding ſyſtem is, that the intereſt is regularly paid. But as the intereſt is

always paid in bank notes, and as bank notes can always be coined for the purpoſe, this mode of payment proves nothing. The point of proof is, can the bank give caſh for the bank notes on which the intereſt is paid? If it cannot, and it is evident it cannot, ſome millions of bank notes muſt go without payment, and thoſe holders of bank notes who apply laſt will be worſt off. Were the preſent quantity of caſh in the bank paid away, it is next to impoſſible to ſee how any new quantity is to arrive. None will arrive from taxes, for the taxes will all be paid in bank notes; and ſhould the government refuſe bank notes in payment of taxes, the credit of bank notes will be gone at once, no caſh will arrive from the buſineſs of diſcounting merchants bills; for every merchant will pay off thoſe bills in bank notes, and not in caſh. There is therefore no means left for the bank to obtain a new ſupply of caſh, after the preſent quantity be paid away. But, beſides the impoſſibility of paying the intereſt of the funded debt in caſh, there are many thouſands perſons in London and in the country, who are holders of bank notes that came into their hands in the fair way of trade, and who are not ſtockholders in the funds; and as ſuch perſons have had no hand in increaſing the demand upon the bank, as thoſe have had who, for their own private intereſt, like Boyd and others, are contracting, or pretending to contract, for new loans, they will conceive they have a juſt right their bank notes ſhould be paid firſt. Boyd has been very ſly in France, in changing his paper into caſh. He will be juſt as ſly in doing the ſame thing in London; for he has learned to calculate: and then it is probable he will ſet off for America.

A ſtoppage of payment at the bank is not a new thing. Smith, in his Wealth of Nations, book 2, chap. 2. ſays, that in the year 1696, exchequer bills fell forty, fifty, and ſixty per cent, bank notes twenty per cent, and the bank ſtopt payment. That which happened in 1696. may happen again in 1796. The period in which it happened was the laſt year of the war of king William. It neceſſarily put a ſtop to the further emiſſion of exchequer and navy bills, and to the raiſing of new loans; and the peace which took place the next year was probably hurried on by this circumſtance, and ſaved the bank from bankruptcy. Smith, in ſpeaking from the circumſtances of the bank, upon another occaſion, ſays (book 2, chap. 2),—"This great company has been reduced to the neceſſity of paying in ſix-pences." When a bank adopts the expedient of paying in ſix-pences, it is a confeſſion of inſolvency.

It is worthy of obſervation, that every caſe of failure in finances,

ſince the ſyſtem of paper began, has produced a revolution in government, either total or partial. A failure in the finance of the aſſignats broke up the revolutionary government, and produced the preſent French conſtitution. A failure in the finances of the old congreſs of America, and the embarraſſments it brought upon the commerce, broke up the ſyſtem of the old confederation, and produced the federal conſtitution. If then we admit of reaſoning by compariſon of cauſes and events, the failure in the Engliſh finances will produce ſome change in the government of that country.

As to Mr. Pitt's project of paying off the national debt by applying a million a year for that purpoſe, while he continues adding more than twenty millions a year to it, it is like ſetting a man with a wooden leg to run after a hare. The longer he runs the farther he is off.

When I ſaid that the funding ſyſtem had entered the laſt twenty years of exiſtence, I certainly did not mean that it would continue twenty years, and then expire as a leaſe would do. I meant to deſcribe that age of decrepitude in which death is every day to be expected, and life cannot continue long. But the death of credit, or that ſtate that is called bankruptcy, is not always marked by thoſe progreſſive ſtages of viſible decline, that mark the decline of natural life. In the progreſſion of natural life, age cannot counterfeit youth, nor conceal the departure of juvenile abilities. But it is otherwiſe with reſpect to the death of credit; for though all the approaches to bankruptcy may actually exiſt in circumſtances, they admit of being concealed by appearances. Nothing is more common than to ſee the bankrupt of to-day a man in credit but the day before; yet no ſooner in the real ſtate of his affairs known, than every body can ſee he had been inſolvent long before. In London, the greateſt theatre of bankruptcy in Europe, this part of the ſubject will be well and feelingly underſtood.

Mr. Pitt continually talks of credit, and of the national reſources. Theſe are two of the feigned appearances by which the approaches to bankruptcy are concealed. That which he calls credit may exiſt, as I have juſt ſhewn, in a ſtate of inſolvency, and is always what I have before deſcribed it to be, *ſuſpicion aſleep*.

As to national reſources, Mr. Pitt, like all the Engliſh financiers that preceded him ſince the funding ſyſtem began, has uniformly miſtaken the nature of a reſource; that is, they have miſtaken it conſiſtently with the deluſion of the funding ſyſtem; but time is explaining the deluſion. That which he calls, and which they called, a

resource, is not a resource, but is the *anticipation* of a resource. They have anticipated what *would have been* a resource in another generation, had not the use of it been so anticipated. The funding system is a system of anticipation. Those who established it an hundred years ago, anticipated the resources of those who were to live an hundred years after; for the people of the present day have to pay the interest of the debts contracted at that time, and of all debts contracted since. But it is the last feather that breaks the horse's back. Had the system began an hundred years before, the amount of taxes at this time to pay the annual interest at four per cent. (could we suppose such a system of insanity could have continued) would be two hundred and twenty millions annually; for the capital of the debt would be 5486 millions, according to the ratio that ascertains the expence of the wars for the hundred years that are past. But long before it could have reached this period, the value of bank notes, from the immense quantity of them, (for it is in paper only that such a nominal revenue could be collected) would have been as low or lower than continental paper money has been in America or assignats in France; and as to the idea of exchanging them for gold and silver, it is too absurd to be contradicted.

Do we not see that nature, in all her operations, disowns the visionary basis upon which the funding system is built? She acts always by renewed successions, and never by accumulating additions perpetually progressing. Animals and vegetables, men and trees, have existed ever since the world began; but that existence has been carried on by succession of generations, and not by continuing the same men and the same trees in existence that existed first; and to make room for the new she removes the old. Every natural ideot can see this. It is the stock-jobbing ideot only that mistakes. He has conceived that art can do what nature cannot. He is teaching her a new system—that there is no occasion for man to die—That the scheme of creation can be carried on upon the plan of the funding system—That it can proceed by continual additions of new beings like new loans, and all live together in eternal youth. Go, count the graves, thou ideot, and learn the folly of thy arithmetic.

But besides these things, there is something visibly farcical in the whole operation of loaning. It is scarcely more than four years ago that such a rot of bankruptcy spread itself over London, that the whole commercial fabric tottered; trade and credit were at a stand; and such was the state of things, that to prevent, or suspend a general bankruptcy, the government lent the merchants six millions in *govern-*

ment paper, and now the merchants lend the government twenty-two millions in *their* paper; and two parties, Boyd and Morgan, men but little known, contend who ſhall be the lenders. What a farce is this! It reduces the operation of loaning to accommodation paper, in which the competitors contend, not who ſhall lend, but who ſhall ſign, becauſe there is ſomething to be got for ſigning.

Every Engliſh ſtock-jobber and miniſter boaſts of the credit of England. Its credit, ſay they, is greater than that of any country in Europe. There is a good reaſon for this; for there is not another country in Europe that could be made the dupe of ſuch a deluſion. The Engliſh funding ſyſtem will remain a monument of wonder, not ſo much on account of the extent to which it has been carried, as of the folly of believing in it.

Thoſe who had formerly predicted that the funding ſyſtem would break up when the debt ſhould amount to one hundred or one hundred and fifty millions, erred only in not diſtinguiſhing between inſolvency and actual bankruptcy; for the inſolvency commenced as ſoon as the government became unable to pay the intereſt in caſh, or to give caſh for the bank notes in which the intereſt was paid, whether that inability was known or not, or whether it was ſuſpected or not. Inſolvency always takes place before bankruptcy; for bankruptcy is nothing more than the publication of that inſolvency. In the affairs of an individual, it often happens that inſolvency exiſts ſeveral years before bankruptcy, and that the inſolvency is concealed and carried on till the individual is not able to pay one ſhilling in the pound. A government can ward off bankruptcy longer than an individual; but inſolvency will inevitably produce bankruptcy, whether in an individual or in a government. If then the quantity of bank notes payable on demand, which the bank has iſſued, are greater than the bank can pay off, the bank is inſolvent; and when that inſolvency be declared, it is bankruptcy.*

* *Among the deluſions that have been impoſed upon the nation by miniſters, to give a falſe colouring to its affairs, and by none more than by Mr. Pitt, is a motley, amphibious chartered thing called the* balance of trade. *This balance of trade, as it is called, is taken from the cuſtom-houſe books, in which entries are made of all cargoes exported, and alſo all cargoes imported, in each year; and when the value of the exports, according to the price ſet upon them by the exporter or by the cuſtom-houſe, is greater than the value of the imports, eſtimated in the ſame manner, they ſay, the balance of trade is much in their favour.*

I come now to ſhew the ſeveral ways by which bank notes get into circulation. I ſhall afterwards offer an eſtimate on the total quantity or amount of bank-notes exiſting at this moment.

The bank acts in three capacities. As a bank of diſcount; as a bank of depoſit; and as bank for the government.

Firſt, as bank of diſcount. The bank diſcounts merchants bills of exchange for two months. When a merchant has a bill that will become due at the end of two months, and wants payment before that time, the bank advances that payment to him, deducting therefrom at the rate of five per cent. per annum. The bill of exchange remains at the bank as a pledge or pawn, and at the end of two months it muſt be redeemed. This tranſaction is done altogether in paper; for the profits of the bank, as a bank of diſcount, ariſe entirely from its making uſe of paper as money. The bank gives bank-notes to the merchant in diſcounting the bill of exchange, and the redeemer of the bill pays bank notes to the bank in redeeming it. It very ſeldom happens that any real money paſſes between them.

The cuſtom-houſe books prove regularly enough that ſo many cargoes have been exported, and ſo many imported; but this is all that they prove, or were intended to prove. They have nothing to do with the balance of profit or loſs; and it is ignorance to appeal to them upon that account: for the caſe is, that the greater the loſs is in any one year, the higher will this thing called the balance of trade appear to be according to the cuſtom-houſe books. For example, nearly the whole of the Mediterranean convoy has been taken by the French this year; conſequently thoſe cargoes will not appear as imports on the cuſtom-houſe books, and therefore the balance of trade, by which they mean the profits of it, will appear to be ſo much the greater as the loſs amounts to; and, on the other hand, had the loſs not happened, the profits would have appeared to have been ſo much the leſs. All the loſſes happening at ſea to returning cargoes, by accidents, by the elements, or by capture, make the balance appear the higher on the ſide of the exports; and were they all loſt at ſea, it would appear to be all profit on the cuſtom-houſe books. Alſo every cargo of exports that is loſt that occaſions another to be ſent, adds in like manner to the ſide of the exports, and appears as profit. This year the balance of trade will appear high, becauſe the loſſes have been great by capture and by ſtorms. The ignorance of the Britiſh parliament, in liſtening to this hackneyed impoſition of miniſters about the balance of trade, is aſtoniſhing. It ſhews how little they know of national affairs; and Mr. Grey may as well talk Greek to them, as to make motions about the ſtate of the nation. They underſtand fox-hunting and the game-laws.

If the profits of a bank be, for example, two hundred thouſand pounds a year (a great ſum to be made merely by exchanging one ſort of paper for another, and which ſhews alſo that the merchants of that place are preſſed for money for payments, inſtead of having money to ſpare to lend to government), it proves that the bank diſcounts to the amount of four millions annually, or 666,666l. every two months; and as there never remain in the bank more than two months pledges, of the value of 666,666l. at any one time, the amount of bank notes in circulation at any one time ſhould not be more than to that amount. This is ſufficient to ſhew that the preſent immenſe quantity of bank notes, which are diſtributed through every city, town, village, and farm-houſe in England, cannot be accounted for on the ſcore of diſcounting.

Secondly, as a bank of depoſit. To depoſit money at the bank means to lodge it there for the ſake of convenience, and to be drawn out at any moment the depoſitor pleaſes, or to be paid away to his order. When the buſineſs of diſcounting is great, that of depoſiting is neceſſarily ſmall. No man depoſits and applies for diſcounts at the ſame time; for it would be like paying intereſt for lending money, inſtead of for borrowing it. The depoſits that are now made at the bank are almoſt entirely in bank notes, and conſequently they add nothing to the ability of the bank to pay off the bank notes that may be preſented for payment; and beſides this, the depoſits are no more the property of the bank than the caſh or bank notes in a merchant's counting houſe are the property of his book-keeper. No great increaſe therefore of bank notes, beyond what the diſcounting buſineſs admits, can be accounted for on the ſcore of depoſits.

Thirdly. The bank acts as banker for the government. This is the connection that threatens ruin to every public bank. It is through this connection that the credit of a bank is forced far beyond what it ought to be, and ſtill further beyond its ability to pay. It is through this connection that ſuch an immenſe redundant quantity of bank notes have gotten into circulation; and which, inſtead of being iſſued becauſe there was property in the bank, have been iſſued becauſe there was none.

When the treaſury is empty, which happens in almoſt every year of every war, its coffers at the bank are empty alſo. It is in this condition of emptineſs that the miniſter has recourſe to emiſſions of what are called exchequer and navy bills, which continually generates a new increaſe of bank notes, and which are ſported upon the public

without there being property in the bank to pay them.—Theſe exchequer and navy bills (being, as I have ſaid, omitted becauſe the treaſury and its coffers at the bank are empty, and cannot pay the demands that come in) are no other than an acknowledgment that the bearer is entitled to receive ſo much money. They may be compared to the ſettlement of an account, in which the debtor acknowledges the balance he owes, and for which he gives a note of hand; or to a note of hand given to raiſe money upon it.

Sometimes the bank diſcounts thoſe bills as it would diſcount merchants' bills of exchange; ſometimes it purchaſes them of the holders at the current price; and ſometimes it agrees with the miniſters to pay an intereſt upon them to the holders, and keep them in circulation. In every one of theſe caſes an additional quantity of bank notes get into circulation, and are ſported, as I have ſaid, upon the public, without there being property in the bank, as banker for the government, to pay them: and beſides this, the bank has now no money of its own; for the money that was originally ſubſcribed to begin the credit of the bank with at its firſt eſtabliſhment, has been lent to government, and waſted long ago.

"The bank (ſays Smith, book 2, chap. 2) acts not only as an "ordinary bank, but as a great engine of ſtate; it receives and pays "the greater part of the annuities which are due to the creditors of "the *public*." (It is worth obſerving, that the *public*, or the *nation*, is always put for the government in ſpeaking of debts.) "It circu-"lates" (ſays Smith) "exchequer bills, and it advances to government "the annual amount of the land and malt taxes, which are frequently "not paid till ſeveral years afterwards." (This advancement is alſo done in bank notes, for which there is not property in the bank.) "In thoſe different operations (ſays Smith) *its duty to the public* may "ſometimes have obliged it, without any fault of its directors, *to* "*overſtock the circulation with paper money*,"—bank notes. How its *duty to the public* can induce it *to overſtock that public* with promiſſory bank notes which it *cannot pay*, and thereby expoſe the individuals of that public to ruin, is too paradoxical to be explained; for it is on the credit which individuals *give to the bank*, by receiving and circulating its notes, and not upon its *own* credit or its *own* property, for it has none, that the bank ſports. If however it be the duty of the bank to expoſe the public to this hazard, it is at leaſt equally the duty of the individuals of that public to get their money and take care of themſelves; and leave it to placemen, penſioners, government contractors, Reeves's aſſociation, and the members of both houſes

of parliament, who have voted away the money at the nod of the miniſter, to continue the credit if they can, and for which their eſtates individually and collectively ought to anſwer, as far as they will go.

There has always exiſted, and ſtill exiſts a myſterious, ſuſpicious connection, between the miniſter and the directors of the bank. and which explains itſelf no otherwiſe than by a continual increaſe of bank notes. Without, therefore, entering into any further details of the various contrivances by which bank notes are iſſued, and thrown upon the public, I proceed, as I before mentioned, to offer an eſtimate on the total quantity of bank notes in circulation.

However diſpoſed governments may be to wring money by taxes from the people, there is a limit to the practice eſtabliſhed in the nature of things. That limit is the proportion between the quantity of money in a nation, be that quantity of money what it may, and the greateſt quantity of taxes that can be raiſed upon it. People have other uſes for money beſides paying taxes; and it is only a proportional part of that money they can ſpare for taxes, as it is only a proportionable part they can ſpare for houſe-rent, for clothing, or for any other particular uſe. Theſe proportions find out and eſtabliſh themſelves; and that with ſuch exactneſs, that if any one part exceeds its proportion, all the other parts feel it.

Before the invention of paper money (bank notes), there was no other money in the nation than gold and ſilver, and the greateſt quantity of money that ever was raiſed in taxes during that period, never exceeded a fourth part of the quantity of money in the nation. It was high taxing when it came to this point. The taxes in the time of William the third never reached to four millions before the invention of paper, and the quantity of money in the nation at that time was eſtimated to be about ſixteen millions. The ſame proportions eſtabliſhed themſelves in France. There was no paper money in France before the preſent revolution, and the taxes were collected in gold and ſilver money. The higheſt quantity of taxes never exceeded twenty-two millions ſterling; and the quantity of gold and ſilver money in the nation at the ſame time, as ſtated by Mr. Neckar, from returns of coinage at the mint, in his Treatiſe on the Adminiſtration of the Finances, was about ninety millions ſterling. To go beyond this limit of a fourth part, in England, they were obliged to introduce paper money; and the attempt to go beyond it in France, where paper could not be introduced, broke up the government. This proportion therefore of a fourth part, is the limit which the

nature of the thing eſtabliſhes for itſelf, be the quantity of money in a nation more or leſs.

The amount of taxes in England at this time is full twenty millions; and therefore the quantity of gold and ſilver, and of bank notes, taken together, amounts to eighty millions. The quantity of gold and ſilver, as ſtated by Lord Hawkeſbury's ſecretary (George Chalmers), as I have before ſhewn, is twenty millions; and therefore the total amount of bank notes in circulation, all made payable on demand, is ſixty millions. This enormous ſum will aſtoniſh the moſt ſtupid ſtock-jobber, and overpower the credulity of the moſt thoughtleſs Engliſhman: but were it only a third part of that ſum, the bank cannot pay half a crown in the pound.

There is ſomething curious in the movements of this modern complicated machine, the funding ſyſtem; and it is only now that it is beginning to unfold the full extent of its movements. In the firſt part of its movements it gives great powers into the hands of government, and in the laſt part it takes them completely away.

The funding ſyſtem ſet out with raiſing revenues under the name of loans, by means of which government became both prodigal and powerful. The loaners aſſumed the name of creditors, and though it was ſoon diſcovered that loaning was government jobbing, thoſe pretended loaners, or the perſons who purchaſed into the funds afterwards, conceived themſelves not only to be creditors, but to be the *only* creditors.

But ſuch has been the operation of this complicated machine, the funding ſyſtem, that it has produced, unperceived, a ſecond generation of creditors, more numerous and far more formidable, and withal more real than the firſt generation; for every holder of a bank note is a creditor, and a real creditor, and the debt due to him is made payable on demand. The debt therefore which the government owes to individuals is compoſed of two parts; the one about four hundred millions bearing intereſt, the other about ſixty millions payable on demand. The one is called the funded debt, the other is the debt due in bank notes.

This ſecond debt (that contained in the bank notes) has, in a great meaſure, been incurred to pay the intereſt of the firſt debt; ſo that in fact little or no real intereſt has been paid by government. The whole has been deluſion and fraud. Government firſt contracted a debt in the form of loans with one claſs of people, and then run clandeſtinely into debt with another claſs, by means of bank notes, to pay the intereſt. Government acted of itſelf in contracting the

firſt debt, and made a machine of the bank to contract the ſecond.

—It is this ſecond debt that changes the ſeat of power and the order of things; for it puts it in the power of even a ſmall part of the holders of bank notes (had they no other motive than diſguſt at Pitt and Grenville's ſedition bills) to control any meaſure of government they found to be injurious to their intereſt; and that not by popular meetings, or popular ſocieties, but by the ſimple and eaſy operation of with-holding their credit from that government; that is, by individually demanding payment at the bank for every bank note that comes into their hands. Why ſhould Pitt and Grenville expect that the very men whom they inſult and injure ſhould at the ſame time continue to ſupport the meaſures of Pitt and Grenville, by giving credit to their promiſſory notes of payment? No new emiſſions of bank notes could go on while payment was demanding on the old and the caſh in the bank waſting daily away; nor any new advances be made to government or to the emperor to carry on the war; nor any new emiſſion be made on exchequer bills.

"*The bank*," ſays Smith, (book ii.ch. 2) is "*a great engine of ſtate.* And in the ſame paragraph he ſays, "*The ſtability of the bank is equal to that of the Britiſh government*;" which is the ſame as to ſay that the ſtability of the government is equal to that of the bank, and no more. If then the bank cannot pay, the *arch-treaſurer of the holy Roman empire* (S. R. I. A.*) is a bankrupt. When Folly invented titles, ſhe did not attend to their application; for ever ſince the government of England has been in the hands of *arch-treaſurers*, it has been running into bankruptcy; and as to the arch-treaſurer *apparent*, he has been a bankrupt long ago. What a miſerable proſpect has England before its eyes!

Before the war of 1755 there were no bank notes lower than twenty pounds. During that war bank notes of fifteen pounds and of ten pounds were coined; and now, ſince the commencement of the preſent war, they are coined as low as five pounds. Theſe five pound notes will circulate chiefly among little ſhop-keepers, butchers, bakers, market people, renters of ſmall houſes, lodgers, &c. All the high departments of commerce, and the affluent ſtations of life were already *overſtocked*, as Smith expreſſes it, with the bank notes. No place remained open wherein to crowd an additional quantity of bank notes but among the claſs of people I have juſt mentioned, and the means of doing this could be beſt effected by coining five pound notes.

* *Part of the inſcription on an Engliſh guinea.*

This conduct has the appearance of that of an unprincipled infolvent, who, when on the verge of bankruptcy to the amount of many thonfands, will borrow as low as five pounds of the fervants in his houfe, and break the next day.

But whatever momentary relief or aid the minifter and his bank might expect from this low contrivance of five pound notes, it will increafe the inability of the bank to pay the higher notes, and haften the deftruction of all; for even the fmall taxes that ufed to be paid in money will now be paid in thofe notes, and the bank will foon find itfelf with fcarcely any other money than what the hair powder guinea tax brings in.

The bank notes make the moft ferious part of the bufinefs of finance; what is called the national funded debt is but a trifle when put in comparifon with it; yet the cafe of the bank notes has never been touc' ed upon. But it certainly ought to be known upon what authority, whether that of the minifter or of the directors, and upon what foundation, fuch immenfe quantities are iffued. I have ftated the amount of them at fixty millions fterling; I have produced data for that eftimation; and befides this, the apparent quantity of them, far beyond that of gold and filver in the nation, corroborates therewith. But were there but a third part of fixty millions, the bank cannot pay half a crown in the pound; for no new fupply of money, as before faid, can arrive at the bank, as all the taxes will be paid in paper.

When the funding fyftem began, it was not doubted that the loans that had been borrowed would be repaid. Government not only propagated that belief, but it began paying them off. In time this profeffion came to be abandoned: and it is not difficult to fee that bank notes will march the fame way; for the amount of them is only another debt under another name; and the probability is that Mr. Pitt will at laft propofe funding them. In that cafe bank notes will not be fo valuable as French affignats. The affignats have a folid property in referve in the national domains; bank notes have none; and befides this, the Engliih revenue muft then fink down to what the amount of it was before the funding fyftem began; between three and four millions. One of which the *arch-treafurer* would require for himfelf, and the arch-treafurer *apparent* would require three-quarters of a million more to pay his debts. "*In France,*" fays Sterne, "*they order thefe things better.*"

I have now expofed the Engliih fyftem of finance to the eyes of all nations; for this work will be publifhed in all languages. In do-

ing this, I have done an act of juſtice to thoſe numerous citizens of neutral nations who have been impoſed upon by that fraudulent ſyſtem, and who have property at ſtake upon the event.

As an individual citizen of America, and as far as an individual can go, I have revenged (if I may uſe the expreſſion without any immoral meaning) the piratical depredations committed on the American commerce by the Engliſh government.—I have retaliated for France on the ſubject of finance: and I conclude with retorting on Mr. Pitt the expreſſion he uſed againſt France, and ſay, that the Engliſh ſyſtem of finance "IS ON THE VERGE, NAY EVEN IN THE GULPH OF BANKRUPTCY."

THOMAS PAINE.

PARIS, 19th Germinal, 4th year of the Republic—April 8, 1796.

LETTER

TO THE

PEOPLE OF FRANCE

PARIS, *Sept.* 25. (*First Year of the Republic.*)

FELLOW CITIZENS,

I RECEIVE, with affectionate gratitude, the honour which the late national aſſembly has conferred upon me, by adopting me a citizen of France; and the additional honour of being elected by my fellow-citizens a member of the national convention. Happily impreſſed, as I am, by thoſe teſtimonies of reſpect ſhewn towards me as an individual, I feel my felicity encreaſed by ſeeing the barrier broken down that divided patriotiſm by ſpots of earth, and limited citizenſhip to the ſoil, like vegetation.

" Had thoſe honours been conferred in an hour of national tranquility, they would have afforded no other means of ſhewing my affection, than to have accepted and enjoyed them; but they come accompanied with circumſtances that give me the honourable opportunity of commencing my citizenſhip in the ſtormy hour of difficulties. I come not to enjoy repoſe. Convinced that the cauſe of France is the cauſe of all mankind, and that as liberty cannot be purchaſed by a wiſh, I gladly ſhare with you the dangers and honours neceſſary to ſucceſs.

" I am well aware that the moment of any great change, ſuch as that accompliſhed on the 10th of Auguſt, is unavoidably the moment of terror and confuſion. The mind highly agitated by hope, ſuſpicion, and apprehenſion, continues without reſt till the change be accompliſhed. But let us now look calmly and confidentially forward, and ſucceſs is certain. It is no longer the paltry cauſe of kings, or of this, or of that individual, that calls France and her armies into action. It is the great cauſe of ALL. It is the eſtabliſhment of a

new era, that ſhall blot deſpotiſm from the earth, and fix, on the laſting principles of peace and citizenſhip, the great republic of man.

" It has been my fate to have borne a ſhare in the commencement and complete eſtabliſhment of one Revolution (I mean the revolution of America). The ſucceſs and events of that revolution are encouraging to us. The proſperity and happineſs that have ſince flowed to that country, have amply rewarded her for all the hardſhips ſhe endured, and for all the dangers ſhe encountered.

" The principles on which that revolution began, have extended themſelves to Europe ; and an over-ruling providence is regenerating the old world by the principles of the new. The diſtance of America from all the other parts of the globe, did not admit of her carrying thoſe principles beyond her own ſituation. It is to the peculiar honour of France, that ſhe now raiſes the ſtandard of liberty for all nations ; and in fighting her own battles, contends for the rights of all mankind.

" The ſame ſpirit of fortitude that inſured ſucceſs to America, will inſure it to France ; for it is impoſſible to conquer a nation determined to be free ! The military circumſtances that now unite themſelves to France, are ſuch as the deſpots of the earth know nothing of, and can form no calculation upon. They know not what it is to fight againſt a nation. They have only been accuſtomed to make war upon each other, and they know from ſyſtem and practice, how to calculate the probable ſucceſs of deſpot againſt deſpot ; and here their knowledge and their experience end.

" But in a conteſt like the preſent, a new and boundleſs variety of circumſtances ariſes, that deranges all ſuch cuſtomary calculations. When a whole nation acts as an army, the deſpot knows not the extent of the power againſt which he contends. New armies riſe againſt him with the neceſſity of the moment. It is then that the difficulties of an invading enemy multiply, as in the former caſe they diminiſhed ; and he finds them at their height when he expected them to end.

" The only war that has any ſimilarity of circumſtances with the preſent, is the late revolution-war in America. On her part, as it now is in France, it was a war of the whole nation.—There it was that the enemy, by beginning to conquer, put himſelf in a condition of being conquered. His firſt victories prepared him for defeat. He advanced till he could not retreat, and found himſelf in the midſt of a nation of armies.

" Were it now to be propoſed to the Auſtrians and Pruſſians, to eſcort them into the middle of France, and there leave them to make the moſt of ſuch a ſituation, they would ſee too much into the dangers of it to accept the offer, and the ſame dangers that would attend them could they arrive there by any other means. Where then is the military policy of their attempting to obtain by force, that which they would refuſe by choice. But to reaſon with deſpots is throwing reaſon away. The beſt of arguments is a vigourous preparation.

" Man is ever a ſtranger to the ways by which providence regulates the order of things. The interference of foreign deſpots may ſerve to introduce into their own enſlaved countries the principles they come to oppoſe. Liberty and equality are bleſſings too great to be the inheritance of France alone. It is honour to her to her to be their firſt champion ; and ſhe may now ſay to her enemies, with a mighty voice, " O! ye Auſtrians, ye Pruſſians! ye who now turn your bayonets againſt us; it is for all Europe ; it is for all mankind, and not for France alone, that ſhe raiſes the ſtandard of liberty and equality !"

" The public cauſe has hitherto ſuffered from the contradictions contained in the conſtitution of the former conſtituent aſſembly. Thoſe contradictions have ſerved to divide the opinions of individuals at home, and to obſcure the great principles of the revolution in other countries. But when thoſe contradictions ſhall be removed, and the conſtitution be made conformable to the declaration of rights ; when the bagatelles of monarchy, royalty, regency ; and hereditary ſucceſſion, ſhall be expoſed, with all their abſurdities, a new ray of light will be thrown over the world, and the revolution will derive new ſtrength by being univerſally underſtood.

" The ſcene that now opens itſelf to France extends far beyond the boundaries of her own dominions. Every nation is becoming her colleague, and every court is become her enemy. It is now the cauſe of all nations againſt the cauſe of all courts. The terror that deſpotiſm felt, clandeſtinely begot a confederation of deſpots ; and their attack upon France was produced by their fears at home.

" In entering on this great ſcene, greater than any nation has yet been called to act in, let us ſay to the agitated mind, be calm. Let us puniſh by inſtructing, rather than by revenge. Let us begin the new æra by a greatneſs of friendſhip, and hail the approach of union and ſucceſs.

" Your Fellow Citizen,

" THOMAS PAINE."

REASONS

FOR

PRESERVING THE LIFE OF LOUIS CAPET, AS DELIVERED TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION.

CITIZEN PRESIDENT,

MY hatred and abhorrence of monarchy are ſufficiently known, they originate in principles of reaſon and conviction, nor except with life, can they ever be extirpated; but my compaſſion for the unfortunate, whether friend or enemy, is equally lively and ſincere.

I voted that Louis ſhould be tried, becauſe it was neceſſary to afford proofs to the world of the perfidy, corruption, and abomination of the monarchical ſyſtem. The infinity of evidence that has been produced, expoſes them in the moſt glaring and hideous colours,—thence it reſults, that monarchy, whatever form it may aſſume, arbitrary or otherwiſe, becomes neceſſarily a centre, round which are united every ſpecies of corruption, and the kingly trade is no leſs deſtructive of all morality in the human breaſt, than the trade of an executioner is deſtructive of its ſenſibility.

I remember during my reſidence in another country, that I was exceedingly ſtruck with a ſentence of M. Autheine, at the Jacobins, which correſponds exactly with my own idea,—"Make me a king to day," ſaid he, "and I ſhall be a robber to-morrow."

Nevertheleſs I am inclined to believe that if Louis Capet had been born in an obſcure condition, had he lived within the circle of an amiable and reſpectable neighbourhood, at liberty to practice the duties of domeſtic life, had he been thus ſituated, I cannot believe that he would have ſhewn himſelf deſtitute of ſocial virtues: we are in a moment of fermentation like this, naturally little indulgent to his vices, or rather to thoſe of monarchical governments; we regard them with additional horror and indignation; not that they are more heinous than thoſe of his predeceſſors, but becauſe our eyes are now open and the veil of deluſion at length withdrawn; yet the lamentable, degraded ſtate to which he is actually reduced, is ſurely far leſs imputable to him, than to the conſtituent aſſembly, which of

its own authority, without conſent or advice of the people, reſtored him to the throne.

I was in Paris at the time of the flight or abdication of Louis XVI, and when he was taken and brought back. The propoſal of reſtoring to him the ſupreme power ſtruck me with amazement; and although at that time I was not a French citizen, yet as a citizen of the world, I employed all the efforts that depended on me to prevent it.

A ſmall ſociety, compoſed only of five perſons, two of whom are now members of the convention, took at that time, the name of the republican club (ſociete republicaine). This ſociety oppoſed the reſtoration of Louis, not ſo much on account of his perſonal offences, as in order to overthrow the monarchy, and to erect on its ruins the republican ſyſtem, and an equal repreſentation.

With this deſign, I traced out in the Engliſh language certain propoſitions, which were tranſlated with ſome trifling alterations, and ſigned by Achilles Duchatlet, actually lieutenant general in the army of the French republic, and at that time, one of the five members which compoſed our little party: the law requiring the ſignature of a citizen at bottom of each printed paper.

The paper was indignantly torn by Malouet; and brought forth in this very room as an article of accuſation againſt the perſon who had ſigned it, the author and their adherents, but ſuch is the revolution of events, that this paper is now received and brought forth for a very oppoſite purpoſe:—To remind the nation of the error of that unfortunate day, that fatal error of having not then baniſhed Louis XVI. from its boſom, and not to plead this day in favour of his exile, preferably to his death.

The paper in queſtion was conceived in the following terms:

"Brethren and fellow citizens,

The ſerene tranquility, the mutual confidence which prevailed amongſt us, during the time of the late king's eſcape, the indifference with which we beheld him return, are unequivocal proofs that the abſence of a king is more deſirable than his preſence, and that he is not only a political ſuperfluity, but a grievous burden preſſing hard on the whole nation.

Let us not be impoſed on by ſophiſms; all that concerns this, is reduced to four points.

He has abdicated the throne in having fled from his poſt. Abdication and deſertion are not characterized by the length of abſence; but by the ſingle act of flight. In the preſent inſtance, the act is every thing, and the time nothing.

The nation can never give back its confidence to a man who, falfe to his truft, perjured to his oath, conſpires a clandeſtine flight, obtains a fraudulent paſſport, conceals a king of France under the diſguiſe of a valet, directs his courſe towards a frontier covered with traitors and deſerters, and evidently meditates a return into our country, with a force capable of impoſing his own deſpotic laws.

Whether ought his flight to be conſidered as his own act, or the act of thoſe who fled with him. Was it a ſpontaneous reſolution of his own, or was it inſpired into him by others? The alternative is immaterial: Whether fool or hypocrite, idiot or traitor, he has proved himſelf equally unworthy of the vaſt important functions that had been delegated to him.

In every ſenſe that the queſtion can be conſidered, the reciprocal obligation which ſubſiſted between us is diſſolved. He holds no longer authority. We owe him no longer obedience. We ſee in him no more than an indifferent perſon; we can regard him only as Louis Capet.

The hiſtory of France preſents little elſe than a long ſeries of public calamity, which takes its ſource from the vices of the king: We have been the wretched victims that have never ceaſed to ſuffer either for them or by them. The catalogue of their oppreſſions was complete, but to complete the ſum of their crimes, treaſon yet was wanting. Now the only vacancy is filled up, the dreadful liſt is full: The ſyſtem is exhauſted: There are no remaining errors for them to commit, their reign is conſequently at an end.

What kind of office muſt that be in a government which requires neither experience nor ability to execute?—That may be abandoned to the deſperate chance of birth, that may be filled with an idiot, a madman, a tyrant, with equal effect, as by the good, the virtuous and the wiſe. An office of this nature is a mere non-entity: It is a place of ſhew, not of uſe. Let France then, arrived at the age of reaſon, no longer be deluded by the ſound of words, and let her deliberately examine, if a king, however inſignificant and contemptible in himſelf, may not at the ſame time be extremely dangerous.

The thirty millions which it coſts to ſupport a king in the eclat of ſtupid brutal luxury, preſent us with an eaſy method of reducing taxes, which reduction would at once releaſe the people, and ſtop the progreſs of political corruption. The grandeur of nations conſiſts not, as kings pretend, in the ſplendour of thrones, but in a conſpicuous ſenſe of their own dignity, and in a juſt diſdain of thoſe barbarous follies and crimes, which, under the ſanction of royalty, have hitherto deſolated Europe.

As to the perſonal ſafety of Mr. Louis Capet, it is ſo much the more confirmed, as France will not ſtop to degrade herſelf by a ſpirit of revenge againſt a wretch, who has diſhonoured himſelf. In defending a juſt and glorious cauſe it is not poſſible to degrade it, and the univerſal tranquility which prevails, is an undeniable proof, that a free people know how to reſpect themſelves."

Having thus explained the principles and the exertions of the republicans at that fatal period, when Louis was reinſtated in full poſſeſſion of the executive power, which by his flight had been ſuſpended, I return to the ſubject, and to the deplorable ſituation in which the man is now actually involved.

What was neglected at the time of which I have been ſpeaking, has been ſince brought about by the force of neceſſity; the wilful treacherous defects in the former conſtitution have been brought to light, the continual alarm of treaſon and conſpiracy rouſed the nation, and produced eventually a ſecond revolution. The people have beat down royalty, never, never to riſe again; they have brought Louis Capet to the bar, and demonſtrated in the face of the whole world the intrigues, the cabals, the falſehood, corruption and rooted depravity, the inevitable effects of monarchical governments. There remains then only one queſtion to be conſidered, what is to be done with this man?

For myſelf, I ſeriouſly confeſs, that when I reflect on the unaccountable folly that reſtored the executive power to his hands, all covered as he was with perjury and treaſon, I am far more ready to condemn the conſtituent aſſembly than the unfortunate priſoner Louis Capet.

But abſtracted from every other conſideration, there is one circumſtance in his life which ought to cover, or at leaſt to palliate, a great number of his tranſgreſſions, and this very circumſtance affords the French nation a bleſſed occaſion of extricating itſelf from the yoke of kings, without defiling itſelf in the impurities of their blood.

It is to France alone, I know, that the United States of America owe that ſupport which enabled them to ſhake off the unjuſt and tyrannical yoke of Britain.—The ardour and zeal which ſhe diſplayed to provide both men and money, were the natural conſequences of a thirſt for liberty. But as the nation at that time, reſtrained by the ſhackles of her own government, could only act by the means of a monarchical organ, this organ—whatever in other reſpects the object might be, certainly performed a good, a great action. Let then theſe United States be the ſafeguard and aſylum of Louis Capet. There, hereafter, far removed from the miſeries and crimes of royalty,

he may learn, from the conſtant aſpect of public proſperity, that the true ſyſtem of government conſiſts not in kings, but in fair, equal, and honourable repreſentation.

In relating this circumſtance, and in ſubmitting this propoſition I conſider myſelf as a citizen of both countries. I ſubmit it as a citizen of America, who feels the debt of gratitude which he owes to every Frenchman. I ſubmit it alſo as a man, who, although the enemy of kings, cannot forget that they are ſubject to human frailties.

I ſupport my propoſition as a citizen of the French republic, becauſe it appears to me the beſt, the moſt politic meaſure, that can be adopted.

As far as my experience in public life extends, I have ever obſerved, that the great maſs of the people are invariably juſt, both in their intentions and in their object: but the true method of accompliſhing that effect, does not always ſhew itſelf in the firſt inſtance.

For example, the Engliſh nation had groaned under the deſpotiſm of the Stuarts. Hence Charles the firſt loſt his life; yet Charles the ſecond was reſtored to all the plenitude of power, which his father had loſt.

Forty years had not expired, when the ſame family ſtrove to reeſtabliſh their ancient oppreſſions; ſo the nation then baniſhed from its territories the whole race. The remedy was effectual. The Stuart family ſunk into obſcurity, crouded itſelf with the multitude, and is at length extinct.

The French nation, more enlightened than England was at that time, has carried her meaſures of government to a greater length. France is not ſatisfied with expoſing the guilt of the monarch, ſhe has penetrated into the views and horrors of the monarchy. She has ſhewn them clear as day light, and forever cruſhed that infernal ſyſtem; and he, whoever he may be, that ſhould ever dare to reclaim thoſe rights, he would be regarded not as a pretender, but puniſhed as a traitor.

Two brothers of Louis Capet have baniſhed themſelves from the country; but they are obliged to bear with the ſpirit and etiquetry of the courts where they reſide. They can advance no pretenſions on their own account, ſo long as Louis Capet ſhall live.

The hiſtory of monarchy in France, was a ſyſtem pregnant with crimes and murders, cancelling all natural ties, even thoſe by which brothers are united. We know how often they have aſſaſſinated each other to pave a way to power. As thoſe hopes which the emigrants had repoſed in Louis XVI. are fled, the laſt which remains reſts upon

his death, and their ſituation inclines them to deſire this cataſtrophe, that they may once again rally round a more active chief, and try one further effort under the fortune of the ci-devant monſieur and d'Artois.

That ſuch an enterprize would precipitate them into a new abyſs of calamity and diſgrace it is not difficult to foreſee; but yet it might be attended with mutual loſs, and it is our duty, as legiſlators, not to ſpill a drop of blood, when our purpoſe may be effectually accompliſhed without it.

It has already been propoſed to aboliſh the puniſhment of death: and it is with infinite ſatisfaction, that I recollect the humane and excellent oration pronounced by Roberſpierre, on that ſubject, in the conſtituent aſſembly. This cauſe muſt find its advocates in every corner, where enlightened politicians, and lovers of humanity exiſt; and it ought above all to find them in this aſſembly.

Monarchical governments have trained the human race, and inured it to the ſanguinary arts and refinements of puniſhment; and it is exactly the ſame puniſhment, which has ſo long ſhocked the ſight and tormented the patience of the people; that now, in their turn, they practiſe in revenge on their oppreſſors. But it becomes us to be ſtrictly on our guard againſt the abomination and perverſity of monarchical examples: As France has been the firſt of European nations to aboliſh royalty, let her alſo be the firſt to aboliſh the puniſhment of death, and to find out a milder and more effectual ſubſtitute.

In the particular caſe now under conſideration, I ſubmit the following propoſitions:—1ſt. That the national convention ſhall pronounce ſentence of baniſhment on Louis and his family. 2d. That Louis Capet ſhall be detained in priſon till the end of the war; and at that epoch the ſentence of baniſhment to be executed.

END OF PAINE'S POLITICAL WRITINGS.

THE

AGE OF REASON.

BEING AN

INVESTIGATION

OF

TRUE AND OF FABULOUS

THEOLOGY.

By THOMAS PAINE,

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PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY JAMES CAREY, No. 83, North Second-Street.

TO MY

FELLOW CITIZENS

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

I PUT the following work under your protection. It contains my opinion upon Religion. You will do me the juſtice to remember, that I have always ſtrenuouſly ſupported the Right of every Man to his own opinion, however different that opinion might be to mine. He who denies to another this right, makes a ſlave of himſelf to his preſent opinion, becauſe he precludes himſelf the right of changing it.

The moſt formidable weapon againſt errors of every kind is Reaſon. I have never uſed any other, and I truſt I never ſhall.

Your affectionate friend and fellow citizen,

THOMAS PAINE.

Paris, 8th Pluvioſe,
Second Year of the French Republic, one and indiviſible.
January 27, O. S. 1794.

To the Interpolators & Authors of comments in this Book

1st Are you not aware that in putting your comments upon it you ~~insulting~~ insult the understandings of those w read it after you by the implication that they are n as capable of answering Mr Paine's arguments as you a

2d Are you not aware that you are, for the same reason, making out that you are a very extraordinary reasone

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4th Are you not aware that you make many ~~re~~marks m ridiculous even than the Author himself?

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8th Are you not aware that you do not give Mr. Pain a fair chance with the Reader?

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10th Are you not aware that this practice is Sophomoric and not worthy of an intelligent controversialist?

A Reader

THE

AGE OF REASON.

PART I.

IT has been my intention, for several years past, to publish my thoughts upon religion. I am well aware of the difficulties that attend the subject; and from that consideration had reserved it to a more advanced period of life. I intended it to be the last offering I should make to my fellow citizens of all nations; and that at a time, when the purity of the motive that induced me to it, could not admit of a question, even by those who might disapprove the work.

The circumstance that has now taken place in France, of the total abolition of the whole national order of priesthood, and of every thing appertaining to compulsive systems of religion, and compulsive articles of faith, has not only precipitated my intention, but rendered a work of this kind exceedingly necessary; lest, in the general wreck of superstition, of false systems of government, and false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity, and of the theology that is true.

As several of my colleagues, and others of my fellow citizens of France, have given me the example of making their voluntary and individual profession of faith, I also will make mine; and I do this with all that sincerity and frankness with which the mind of man communicates with itself.

I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope* for happiness beyond this life.

I believe the equality of man, and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow creatures happy.

* Can you assign a reason for the hope

But leſt it ſhould be ſuppoſed that I believe many other things in addition to theſe, I ſhall, in the progreſs of this work, declare the things I do not believe, and my reaſons for not believing them.

I do not believe in the creed profeſſed by the Jewiſh church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Turkiſh church, by the Proteſtant church, nor by any church that I know of. My own mind is my own church.

All national inſtitutions of churches, whether Jewiſh, Chriſtian, or Turkiſh, appear to me no other than human inventions ſet up to terrify and enſlave mankind, and monopolize power and profit.

I do not mean by this declaration to condemn thoſe who believe otherwiſe. They have the ſame right to their belief as I have to mine. But it is neceſſary to the happineſs of man, that he be mentally faithful to himſelf. Infidelity does not conſiſt in believing or in diſbelieving: it conſiſts in profeſſing to believe what he does not believe.

It is impoſſible to calculate the moral miſchief, if I may ſo expreſs it, that mental lying has produced in ſociety. When a man has ſo far corrupted and proſtituted the chaſtity of his mind, as to ſubſcribe his profeſſional belief to things he does not believe, he has prepared himſelf for the commiſſion of every other crime. He takes up the trade of a prieſt for the ſake of gain, and in order to qualify himſelf for that trade, he begins with a perjury. Can we conceive any thing more deſtructive to morality than this?

Soon after I had publiſhed the pamphlet, "*Common Senſe*," in America, I ſaw the exceeding probability that a revolution in the ſyſtem of government, would be followed by a revolution in the ſyſtem of religion. The adulterous connexion of church and ſtate, wherever it had taken place, whether Jewiſh, Chriſtian, or Turkiſh, had ſo effectually prohibited, by pains and penalties, every diſcuſſion upon eſtabliſhed creeds, and upon firſt principles of religion, that until the ſyſtem of government ſhould be changed, thoſe ſubjects could not be brought fairly and openly before the world: but that whenever this ſhould be done, a revolution in the ſyſtem of religion would follow. Human inventions and prieſtcraft would be detected; and man would return to the pure, unmixed, and unadulterated belief of one God, and no more.

Every national church or religion has eſtabliſhed itſelf by pretending ſome ſpecial miſſion from God communicated to certain individuals. The Jews have their Moſes; the Chriſtians their Jeſus Chriſt, their apoſtles and ſaints; and the Turks their Mahomet; as if the way to God was not open to every man alike.

Each of thoſe churches ſhew certain books which they call *revelation*, or the word of God. The Jews ſay that their word of God was given by God to Moſes, face to face; the Chriſtians ſay, that their word of God came by divine inſpiration; and the Turks ſay that their word of God [the Koran] was brought by an Angel from heaven. Each of thoſe churches accuſes the other of unbelief; and, for my own part, I diſbelieve them all.

As it is neceſſary to fix right ideas to words, I will, before I proceed further into the ſubject, offer ſome obſervations on the word *revelation*. Revelation, when applied to religion, means ſomething communicated *immediately* from God to man.

No one will deny or diſpute the power of the Almighty to make ſuch a communication if he pleaſes. But admitting, for the ſake of a caſe, that ſomething has been revealed to a certain perſon, and not revealed to any other perſon, it is revelation to that perſon only. When he tells it to a ſecond perſon, a ſecond to a third, a third to a fourth, and ſo on, it ceaſes to be a revelation to all thoſe perſons. It is revelation to the firſt perſon only, and *hearſay* to every other; and conſequently they are not obliged to believe it.

It is a contradiction in terms and ideas, to call any thing a revelation that comes to us at ſecond hand, either verbally or in writing. Revelation is neceſſarily limited to the firſt communication. After this, it is only an account of ſomething which that perſon ſays was a revelation made to him; and though he may find himſelf obliged to believe it, it cannot be incumbent on me to believe it in the ſame manner, for it was not a revelation made to *me*, and I have only his word for it that it was made to *him*.

When Moſes told the children of Iſrael that he received the two tables of the commandments from the hand of God, they were not obliged to believe him, becauſe they had no other authority for it than his telling them ſo; and I have no other authority for it than ſome hiſtorian telling me ſo, the commandments carrying no internal evidence of divinity with them. They contain ſome good moral precepts, ſuch as any man qualified to be a law-giver, or a legiſlator, could produce himſelf, without having recourſe to ſupernatural intervention.*

† This is utterly false

* *This is, however, neceſſary to except the declaration, which ſays, that God* viſits the ſins of the father upon the children. *It is contrary to every principle of moral juſtice.*

When I am told that the Koran was written in heaven, and brought to Mahomet by an angel, the account comes to near the ſame kind of hearſay evidence, and ſecond-hand authority, as the former. I did not ſee the angel myſelf, and therefore I have a right not to believe it.

When alſo I am told that a woman, called the Virgin Mary, ſaid, or gave out, that ſhe was with child, without any cohabitation with a man, and that her betrothed huſband, Joſeph, ſaid, that an angel told him ſo, I have a right to believe them or not; ſuch a circumſtance required a much ſtronger evidence than their bare word for it: but we have not even this; for neither Joſeph nor Mary wrote any ſuch matter themſelves. It is only reported by others that *they ſaid ſo*. It is hearſay upon hearſay, and I do not chuſe to reſt my belief upon ſuch evidence.

It is, however, not difficult to account for the credit that was given to the ſtory of Jeſus Chriſt being the ſon of God. He was born when the heathen mythology had ſtill ſome faſhion and repute in the world, and that mythology had prepared the people for the belief of ſuch a ſtory. Almoſt all the extraordinary men that lived under the heathen mythology, were reputed to be the ſons of ſome of their gods. It was not a new thing at that time to believe a man to have been celeſtially begotten: the intercourſe of gods with women was then a matter of familiar opinion. Their Jupiter, according to their accounts, had cohabited with hundreds: the ſtory, therefore, had nothing in it either new, wonderful, or obſcene: it was conformable to the opinions that then prevailed among the people called Gentiles, or mythologiſts, and it was thoſe people only that believed it. The Jews, who had kept ſtrictly to the belief of one God, and no more, and who had always rejected the heathen mythology, never credited the ſtory.

It is curious to obſerve how the theory of what is called the Chriſtian church, ſprung out of the tail of the heathen mythology. A direct incorporation took place in the firſt inſtance, by making the reputed founder to be celeſtially begotten. The trinity of gods that then followed, was no other than a reduction of the former plurality, which was about twenty or thirty thouſand. The ſtatue of Mary ſucceeded the ſtatue of Diana of Epheſus. The deification of heroes, changed into the canonization of ſaints. The mythologiſts had gods for every thing: the Chriſtian mythologiſts had ſaints for every thing. The church became as crowded with the one, as the pantheon had been with the other; and Rome was the place of both.

The Chriſtian theory is little elſe than the idolatry of the ancient mythologiſts, accommodated to the purpoſes of power and revenue; and it yet remains to reaſon and philoſophy to aboliſh the amphibious fraud.

Nothing that is here ſaid can apply, even with the moſt diſtant diſreſpect, to the *real* character of Jeſus Chriſt. He was a virtuous and an amiable man. The morality that he preached and practiſed was of the moſt benevolent kind; and though ſimilar ſyſtems of morality had been preached by Confucius, and by ſome of the Greek philoſophers, many years before; by the Quakers ſince; and by many good men in all ages; it has not been exceeded by any.

Jeſus Chriſt wrote no account of himſelf, of his birth, parentage, or any thing elſe. Not a line of what is called the New Teſtament is of his writing. The hiſtory of him is altogether the work of other people; and as to the account given of his reſurrection and aſcenſion, it was the neceſſary counterpart to the ſtory of his birth. His hiſtorians, having brought him into the world in a ſupernatural manner, were obliged to take him out again in the ſame manner, or the firſt part of the ſtory muſt have fallen to the ground.

The wretched contrivance with which this latter part is told, exceeds every thing that went before it. The firſt part, that of the miraculous conception, was for a thing that admitted of publicity; and therefore the tellers of this part of the ſtory, had this advantage, that though they might not be credited, they could not be detected. They could not be expected to prove it, becauſe it was not one of thoſe things that admitted of proof, and it was impoſſible that the perſon of whom it was told, could prove it himſelf.

But the reſurrection of a dead perſon from the grave, and his aſcenſion through the air, is a thing very different as to the evidence it admits of, to the inviſible conception of a child in the womb. The reſurrection and aſcenſion, ſuppoſing them to have taken place, admitted of public and ocular demonſtration, like that of the aſcenſion of a balloon, or the ſun at noon day, to all Jeruſalem at leaſt. A thing which every body is required to believe, requires that the proof and evidence of it ſhould be equal to all, and univerſal; and as the public viſibility of this laſt related act was the only evidence that could give ſanction to the former part, the whole of it falls to the ground, becauſe that evidence never was given. Inſtead of this, a ſmall number of perſons, not more than

eight or nine, are introduced as proxies for the whole world, to say, they *saw it*, and all the rest of the world are called upon to believe it. But it appears that Thomas did not believe the resurrection; and as they say, would not believe, without having ocular and manual demonstration himself. *So neither will I;* and the reason is equally as good for me, and for every other person, as for Thomas.

It is in vain to attempt to palliate or disguise this matter. The story, so far as relates to the supernatural part, has every mark of fraud and imposition stamped upon the face of it. Who were the authors of it is as impossible for us now to know, as it is for us to be assured, that the books in which the account is related, were written by the persons whose names they bear. The best surviving evidence we now have, respecting this affair, is the Jews. They are regularly descended from the people who lived in the times this resurrection and ascension is said to have happened, and they say, *it is not true.* It has long appeared to me a strange inconsistency, to cite the Jews as a proof of the truth of the story. It is just the same as if a man were to say, I will prove the truth of what I have told you, by producing the people who say it is false.

That such a person as Jesus Christ existed, and that he was crucified, which was the mode of execution at that day, are historical relations strictly within the limits of probability. He preached most excellent morality, and the equality of man; but he preached also against the corruptions and avarice of the Jewish priests; and this brought upon him the hatred and vengeance of the whole order of priesthood. The accusation which those priests brought against him, was that of sedition and conspiracy against the Roman government, to which the Jews were then subject and tributary; and it is not improbable that the Roman government might have some secret apprehension of the effects of his doctrine, as well as the Jewish priests; neither is it improbable that Jesus Christ had in contemplation the delivery of the Jewish nation from the bondage of the Romans. Between the two, however, this virtuous reformer and revolutionist lost his life.

It is upon this plain narrative of facts, together with another case I am going to mention, that the Christian mythologists, calling themselves the Christian church, have erected their fable, which for absurditity and extravagance, is not exceeded by any thing that is to be found in the mythology of the ancients.

The ancient mythologists tell that the race of giants made war against Jupiter, and that one of them threw an hundred rocks against him at one throw; that Jupiter defeated him with thunder, and

confined him afterwards under Mount Etna; and that every time the giant turns himself, Mount Etna belches fire. It is here easy to see that the circumstance of the mountain, that of its being a volcano, suggested the idea of the fable; and that the fable is made to fit and wind itself up with that circumstance.

The Christian mythologists tell that their Satan made war against the Almighty, who defeated him, and confined him afterwards, not under a mountain, but in a pit. It is here easy to see that the first fable suggested the idea of the second; for the fable of Jupiter and the Giants was told many hundred years before that of Satan.

Thus far the ancient and the Christian mythologists differ very little from each other. But the latter have contrived to carry the matter much farther. They have contrived to connect the fabulous part of the story of Jesus Christ with the fable originating from Mount Etna: and in order to make all parts of the story tie together, they have taken to their aid the traditions of the Jews; for the Christian mythology is made up partly from the ancient mythology, and partly from the Jewish traditions.

The Christian mythologists, after having confined Satan in a pit, were obliged to let him out again, to bring on the sequel of the fable. He is then introduced into the garden of Eden in the shape of a snake, or a serpent, and in that shape he enters into familiar conversation with Eve, who is no ways surprised to hear a snake talk; and the issue of this *tête-à-tête* is, that he persuades her to eat an apple, and the eating of that apple, damns all mankind.

After giving Satan this triumph over the whole creation, one would have supposed that the church mythologists would have been kind enough to send him back again to the pit; or, if they had not done this, that they would have put a mountain upon him, (for they say that their faith can remove a mountain) or have put him *under* a mountain, as the former mythologists had done, to prevent his getting again among the women, and doing more mischief. But instead of this, they leave him at large without even obliging him to give his parole. The secret of which is, that they could not do without him; and after being at the trouble of making him, they bribed him to stay. They promised him ALL the Jews, ALL the Turks by anticipation, nine-tenths of the world beside, and Mahomet into the bargain. After this, who can doubt the bountifulness of the Christian mythology?

Having thus made an insurrection and a battle in heaven, in which none of the combatants could be either killed or wounded—

put Satan into the pit—let him out again—given him a triumph over the whole creation—damned all mankind by the eating of an apple, theſe Chriſtian mythologiſts bring the two ends of their fable together. They repreſent this virtuous and amiable man, Jeſus Chriſt, to be at once both God and man, and alſo the ſon of God, celeſtially begotten on purpoſe to be ſacrificed, becauſe, they ſay, that Eve, in her longing, had eaten an apple.

Putting aſide every thing that might excite laughter by its abſurdity, or deteſtation by its prophaneneſs, and confining ourſelves merely to an examination of the parts, it is impoſſible to conceive a ſtory more derogatory to the Almighty, more inconſiſtent with his wiſdom, more contradictory to his power, than this ſtory is.

In order to make for it a foundation to riſe upon, the inventors were under the neceſſity of giving to the being, whom they call Satan, a power equally as great, if not greater, than they attribute to the Almighty. They have not only given him the power of liberating himſelf from the pit, after what they call his fall, but they have made that power increaſe afterwards to infinity. Before his fall, they repreſent him only as an angel of limited exiſtence, as they repreſent the reſt. After his fall, he becomes, by their account, omnipreſent. He exiſts every where, and at the ſame time. He occupies the whole immenſity of ſpace.

Not content with this deification of Satan, they repreſent him as defeating by ſtratagem, in the ſhape of an animal of the creation, all the power and wiſdom of the Almighty. They repreſent him as having compelled the Almighty to the *dire neceſſity* either of ſurrendering the whole of the creation to the government and ſovereignty of this Satan, or of capitulating for its redemption, by coming down upon earth, and exhibiting himſelf upon a croſs in the ſhape of a man. Had the inventors of this ſtory told it the contrary way, that is, had they repreſented the Almighty as compelling Satan to exhibit *himſelf* on a croſs in the ſhape of a ſnake, as a puniſhment for his new tranſgreſſions, the ſtory would have been leſs abſurd, leſs contradictory. But inſtead of this, they make the tranſgreſſor triumph, and the Almighty fall.

That many good men have believed this ſtrange fable, and lived very good lives under that belief, (for credulity is not a crime) is what I have no doubt of. In the firſt place, they were educated to believe it, and they would have believed any thing elſe in the ſame manner. There are alſo many who have been ſo enthuſiaſtically enraptured by what they conceived to be the infinite love of God to

man, in making a sacrifice of himself, that the vehemence of the idea has forbidden and deterred them from examining into the absurdity and profaneness of the story. The more unnatural any thing is, the more it is capable of becoming the object of dismal admiration.

But if objects for gratitude and admiration are our desire, do they not present themselves every hour to our eyes? Do we not see fair creation prepared to receive us the instant we are born; a world furnished to our hand that cost us nothing? Is it we that light up the sun; that pour down the rain; and fill the earth with abundance? Whether we sleep or wake, the vast machinery of the universe still goes on. Are these things, and the blessings they indicate in future, nothing to us? Can our gross feelings be excited by no other subjects than tragedy and suicide? Or is the gloomy pride of man become so intolerable, that nothing can flatter it but a sacrifice of the Creator?

I know that this bold investigation will alarm many, but it would be paying too great a compliment to their credulity to forbear it upon that account. The times and the subject demand it to be done. The suspicion that the theory of what is called the Christian church is fabulous, is becoming very extensive in all countries; and it will be a consolation to men staggering under that suspicion, and doubting what to believe, and what to disbelieve, to see the subject freely investigated. I therefore pass on to an examination of the books called the Old and the New Testament.

These books, beginning with Genesis and ending with the Revelations, (which by the bye is a book of riddles) that requires a revelation to explain it) are, we are told, the word of God. It is therefore proper for us to know who told us so, that we may know what credit to give to the report. The answer to this question is, that nobody can tell, except that we tell one another so. The case, however, historically appears to be as follows:—

When the church mythologists established their system, they collected all the writings they could find, and managed them as they pleased. It is a matter altogether of uncertainty to us, whether such of the writings as now appear, under the name of the Old and the New Testament, are in the same state in which those collectors say they found them; or whether they added, altered, abridged, or dressed them up.

Be this as it may, they decided by vote which of the books out of the collection they had made, should be the WORD OF GOD, and which should not. They rejected several; they voted others to be

doubtful, such as the books called the Apocrypha; and those books which had a majority of votes, were voted to be the word of God. Had they voted otherwise, all the people, since calling themselves Christians, had believed otherwise; for the belief of the one comes from the vote of the other. Who the people were that did all this, we know nothing of; they called themselves by the general name of the church; and this is all we know of the matter.

As we have no other external evidence or authority for believing those books to be the word of God, than what I have mentioned, which is no evidence or authority at all, I come, in the next place, to examine the internal evidence contained in the books themselves.

In the former part of this essay, I have spoken of revelation, I now proceed further with that subject, for the purpose of applying it to the books in question.

Revelation is a communication of something, which the person, to whom that thing is revealed, did not know before. For if I have done a thing, or seen it done, it needs no revelation to tell me I have done it, or seen it, nor to enable me to tell it, or to write it.

Revelation, therefore, cannot be applied to any thing done upon earth, of which man is himself the actor or the witness; and consequently all the historical and anecdotal part of the Bible, which is almost the whole of it, is not within the meaning and compass of the word revelation, and therefore is not the word of God.

When Sampson ran off with the gate-posts of Gaza, if he ever did so (and whether he did or not is nothing to us) or when he visited his Delilah, or caught his foxes, or did any thing else, what has revelation to do with these things? If they were facts, he could tell them himself; or his secretary, if he kept one, could write them, if they were worth either telling or writing; and if they were fictions, revelation could not make them true; and whether true or not, we are neither the better nor the wiser for knowing them. When we contemplate the immensity of that Being, who directs and governs the incomprehensible WHOLE, of which the utmost ken of human sight can discover but a part, we ought to feel shame at calling such paltry stories the word of God.

As to the account of the creation, with which the book of Genesis opens, it has all the appearance of being a tradition which the Israelites had among them before they came into Egypt; and

after their departure from that country, they put it at the head of their hiſtory, without telling, as it is moſt probable that they did not know how they came by it. The manner in which the account opens, ſhews it to be traditionary. It begins abruptly. It is nobody that ſpeaks. It is nobody that hears. It is addreſſed to nobody. It has neither firſt, ſecond, or third perſon. It has every criterion of being a tradition. It has no voucher. Moſes does not take it upon himſelf by introducing it with the formality that he uſes on other occaſions, ſuch as that of ſaying, "*The Lord ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying.*"

Why it has been called the Moſaic account of the creation, I am at a loſs to conceive. Moſes, I believe, was too good a judge of ſuch ſubjects, to put his name to that account. He had been educated among the Egyptians, who were a people as well ſkilled in ſcience, and particularly in aſtronomy, as any people of their day; and the ſilence and caution that Moſes obſerves, in not authenticating the account, is a good negative evidence that he neither told it, nor believed it. The caſe is, that every nation of people, has been world makers, and the Iſraelites had as much right to ſet up the trade of world-making as any of the reſt; and as Moſes was not an Iſraelite, he might not chuſe to contradict the tradition. The account, however, is harmleſs; and this is more than can be ſaid for many other parts of the Bible.

Whenever we read the obſcene ſtories, the voluptuous debaucheries, the cruel and torturous executions, the unrelenting vindictiveneſs, with which more than half the Bible is filled, it would be more conſiſtent that we called it the word of a demon, than the word of God. It is a hiſtory of wickedneſs, that has ſerved to corrupt and brutalize mankind; and, for my own part, I ſincerely deteſt it, as I deteſt every thing that is cruel.

We ſcarcely meet with any thing, a few phraſes excepted, but what deſerves either our abhorrence or our contempt, till we come to the miſcellaneous parts of the Bible. In the anonymous publications, the Pſalms and the Book of Job, more particularly in the latter, we find a great deal of elevated ſentiment reverentially expreſſed of the power and benignity of the Almighty; but they ſtand on no higher rank than many other compoſitions on ſimilar ſubjects, as well before that time as ſince.

The proverbs, which are ſaid to be Solomon's, though moſt probably a collection [becauſe they diſcover a knowledge of life, which his ſituation excluded him from knowing] are an inſtructive

table of ethics. They are inferior in keenneſs to the proverbs of the Spaniards, and not more wiſe and economical than thoſe of the American Franklin.

All the remaining parts of the Bible, generally known by the name of the prophets, are the works of the Jewiſh poets and itinerant preachers, who mixed poetry, anecdote, and devotion together; and thoſe works ſtill retain the air and ſtyle of poetry, though in tranſlation.*

There is not, throughout the whole book, called the Bible, any word that deſcribes to us what we call a poet, nor any word that deſcribes what we call poetry. The caſe is, that the word *prophet*, to which later times have affixed a new idea, was the Bible word

* *As there are many readers who do not ſee that a compoſition is poetry, unleſs it be in rhyme, it is for their information that I add this note.*

Poetry conſiſts principally in two things; imagery and compoſition. The compoſition of poetry differs from that of proſe in the manner of mixing long and ſhort ſyllables together. Take a long ſyllable out of a line of poetry, and put a ſhort one in the room of it, or put a long ſyllable where a ſhort one ſhould be, and that line will loſe its poetical harmony. It will have an effect upon the line like that of miſplacing a note in a ſong.

The imagery in thoſe books, called the Prophets, appertains altogether to poetry. It is fictitious and often extravagant, and not admiſſible in any other kind of writing than poetry.

To ſhew that theſe writings are compoſed in poetical numbers, I will take ten ſyllables as they ſtand in the book, and make a line of the ſame number of ſyllables (heroic meaſure) that ſhall rhyme with the laſt word. It will then be ſeen, that the compoſition of thoſe books is poetical meaſure. The inſtance I ſhall firſt produce is from Iſaiah.

"Hear, O ye heavens, and give ear, O earth."
'Tis God himſelf, that calls attention forth.

Another inſtance I ſhall quote is from the mournful Jeremiah, to which I ſhall add two other lines, for the purpoſe of carrying out the figure, and ſhewing the intention of the poet.

"O! that mine head were waters, and mine eyes"
Were fountains, flowing like the liquid ſkies;
Then would I give the mighty flood releaſe,
And weep a deluge for the human race.

for poet, and the word *propheſying* meant the art of making poetry. It alſo meant the art of playing poetry to a tune, upon any inſtrument of muſic.

We read of propheſying with pipes, tabrets, and horns. Of propheſying with harps, with pſalteries, with cymbals, and with every other inſtrument of muſic then in faſhion. Were we now to ſpeak of propheſying with a fiddle, or with a pipe and tabor, the expreſſion would have no meaning, or would appear ridiculous, and to ſome people contemptuous, becauſe we have changed the meaning of the word.

We are told of Saul being among the *prophets*, and alſo that he propheſied; but we are not told what *they propheſied*, nor what *he propheſied*. The caſe is, there was nothing to tell; for theſe prophets were a company of muſicians and poets; and Saul joined in the concert; and this was called *propheſying*. *1. Sam. 10. 5.*

The account given of this affair in the book called Samuel, is, that Saul met a *company* of prophets; a whole company of them! coming down with a pſaltery, a tabret, a pipe, and a harp, and that they propheſied, and that he propheſied with them. But it appears afterwards, that Saul propheſied badly, that is, he performed his part badly, for it is ſaid, that "an *evil ſpirit from God** came upon Saul and he propheſied." *1. Sam. 19. 9. 16. 14.*

Now, were there no other paſſage in the book, called the Bible, than this, to demonſtrate to us that we have loſt the original meaning of the word *prophecy*, and ſubſtituted another meaning in its place, this alone would be ſufficient; for it is impoſſible to uſe and apply the word *prophecy* in the place it is here uſed and applied, if we give to it the ſenſe which later times have affixed to it. The manner in which it is here uſed, ſtrips it of all religious meaning, and ſhews that a man might then be a *prophet*, or might *prophecy*, as he may now be a poet, or a muſician, without any regard to the morality or the immorality of his character. The word was originally a term of ſcience, promiſcuouſly applied to poetry and to muſic, and not reſtricted to any ſubject upon which poetry and muſic might be exerciſed.

* *As thoſe men, who call themſelves divines and commentators, are very fond of puzzling one another, I leave them to conteſt the meaning of the firſt part of the phraſe, that of* an evil ſpirit from God, *I keep to my text. I keep to the meaning of the word prophecy.*

Deborah and Barak are called prophets, not becauſe they predicted any thing, but becauſe they compoſed the poem or ſong that bears their name in celebration of an act already done: David is ranked among the prophets, for he was a muſician; and was alſo reputed to be (though perhaps very erroneouſly) the author of the Pſalms. But Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, are not called prophets. It does not appear, from any accounts we have, that they could either ſing, play muſic, or make poetry.

We are told of the greater and the leſſer prophets. They might as well tell us of the greater and the leſſer God; for there cannot be degrees in propheſying, conſiſtently with its modern ſenſe. But there are degrees in poetry, and therefore the phraſe is reconcileable to the caſe, when we underſtand by it the greater and the leſſer poets.

It is altogether unneceſſary, after this, to offer any obſervations upon what thoſe men, ſtyled prophets, have written. The axe goes at once to the root, by ſhewing that the original meaning of the word has been miſtaken, and conſequently all the inferences that have been drawn from thoſe books, the devotional reſpect that has been paid to them, and the laboured commentaries that have been written upon them, under that miſtaken meaning, are not worth diſputing about. In many things, however, the writings of the Jewiſh poets, deſerves a better fate than that of being bound up, as they now are, with the traſh that accompanies them, under the abuſed name of the word of God.

If we permit ourſelves to conceive right ideas of things, we muſt neceſſarily affix the idea, not only of unchangeableneſs, but of the utter impoſſibility of any change taking place, by any means or accident whatever, in that which we would honour with the name of the word of God: and therefore the word of God cannot exiſt in any written or human language.

The continually progreſſive change to which the meaning of words is ſubject, the want of an univerſal language which renders tranſlations neceſſary, the errors to which tranſlations are again ſubject, the miſtakes of copyiſts and printers, together with the poſſibility of wilful alteration, are of themſelves evidences, that human language, whether in ſpeech or in print, cannot be the vehicle of the word of God. The word of God exiſts in ſomething elſe.

Did the book, called the Bible, excel in purity of ideas and expreſſion, all the books that are now extant in the world, I would not take it for my rule of faith, as being the word of God; becauſe the poſſibility would nevertheleſs exiſt of my being impoſed upon.

But when I see, throughout the greatest part of this book, scarcely any thing but a history of the grossest vices, and a collection of the most paltry and contemptible tales, I cannot dishonour my Creator by calling it by his name.

Thus much for the Bible.* I now go on to the book called the New Testament. The *new* Testament! that is, the *new* Will, as if there could be two wills of the Creator.

Had it been the object or the intention of Jesus Christ to establish a new religion, he would undoubtedly have written the system himself, or *procured it to be written* in his life time. But there is no publication extant authenticated with his name. All the books called the New Testament were written after his death. He was a Jew by birth and by profession; and he was the Son of God in like manner that every other person is; for the Creator is the Father of All.

The first four books, called Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, do not give a history of the life of Jesus Christ, but only detached anecdotes of him. It appears from these books, that the whole time of his being a preacher was not more than eighteen months; and it was only during this short time, that these men became acquainted with him. They make mention of him, at the age of twelve years, sitting, they say, among the Jewish doctors, asking and answering them questions. As this was several years before their acquaintance with him began, it is most probable they had this anecdote from his parents. From this time there is no account of him for about sixteen years. Where he lived, or how he employed himself during this interval, is not known. Most probably he was working at his father's trade, which was that of a carpenter. It does not appear that he had any school education, and the probability is, that he could not write, for his parents were extremely poor, as appears from their not being able to pay for a bed when he was born.

It is somewhat curious that the three persons whose names are the most universally recorded, were of very obscure parentage. Moses was a foundling, Jesus Christ was born in a stable, and Mahomet was a mule driver. The first and the last of these men, were founders of different systems of religion; but Jesus Christ founded no new system. He called men to the practice of moral virtues, and the belief of one God. The great trait in his character is philanthropy.

The manner in which he was apprehended, shews that he was not much known at that time; and it shews also that the meetings he then held with his followers, were in secret; and that he had given

* School-Boy like. I suppose he did not know that the New Testament forms part of the Bible.

over, or ſuſpended, preaching publicly. Judas could no otherwiſe betray him than by giving information where he was, and pointing him out to the officers that went to arreſt him; and the reaſon for employing and paying Judas to do this, could ariſe only from the cauſes already mentioned, that of his not being much known, and living concealed.

The idea of his concealment, not only agrees very ill with his reputed divinity, but aſſociates with it ſomething of puſillanimity; and his being betrayed, or in other words, his being apprehended, on the information of one of his followers, ſhews that he did not intend to be apprehended, and conſequently that he did not intend to be crucified.

The Chriſtian mythologiſts tell us, that Chriſt died for the ſins of the world, and that he came on *purpoſe to die*. Would it not then have been the ſame if he had died of a fever, or of the ſmall pox, of old age, or of any thing elſe?

The declaratory ſentence which, they ſay, was paſſed upon Adam in caſe he ate of the apple, was not, that *thou ſhalt ſurely be crucified, but thou ſhalt ſurely die*. The ſentence was death, and not the *manner of dying*. Crucifixion, therefore, or any other particular manner of dying, made no part of the ſentence that Adam was to ſuffer, and conſequently, even upon their own tactic, it could make no part of the ſentence that Chriſt was to ſuffer in the room of Adam. A fever would have done as well as a croſs, if there was any occaſion for either.

This ſentence of death, which, they tell us, was thus paſſed upon Adam, muſt either have meant dying naturally, that is, ceaſing to live, or, have meant what theſe mythologiſts call damnation: and conſequently, the act of dying on the part of Jeſus Chriſt, muſt, according to their ſyſtem, apply as a prevention to one or other of thoſe two *things* happening to Adam and to us.

That it does not prevent our dying is evident, becauſe we all die; and if their accounts of longevity be true, men die faſter ſince the crucifixion than before: and with reſpect to the ſecond explanation, (including with it the *natural death* of Jeſus Chriſt as a ſubſtitute for the *eternal death or damnation* of all mankind) it is impertinently repreſenting the Creator as coming off, or revoking the ſentence, by a pun or a quibble upon the word *death*. That manufacturer of quibbles, St. Paul, if he wrote the books that bear his name, has helped this quibble on, by making another quibble upon the word *Adam*. He makes there to be two Adams; the one who ſins

in fact, and suffers by proxy; the other who sins by proxy, and suffers in fact. A religion thus interlarded with quibble, subterfuge and pun, has a tendency to instruct its professors in the practice of these arts. They acquire the habit without being aware of the cause.

If Jesus Christ was the being which those mythologists tell us he was, and that he came into the world to *suffer*, which is a word they sometimes use instead of *to die*, the only real suffering he could have endured would have been *to live*. His existence here was a state of exilement or transportation from heaven, and the way back to his original country was to die.—In fine, every thing in this strange system is the reverse of what it pretends to be. It is the reverse of truth, and I become so tired with examining into its inconsistencies and absurdities, that I hasten to the conclusion of it in order to proceed to something better.

How much, or what parts of the books called the New Testament, were written by the persons whose names they bear, is what we can know nothing of, neither are we certain in what language they were originally written. The matters they now contain may be classed under two heads: anecdote and epistolary correspondence.

The four books already mentioned, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are altogether anecdotal. They relate events after they had taken place. They tell what Jesus Christ did and said, and what others did and said to him; and in several instances they relate the same event differently. Revelation is necessarily out of the question with respect to those books; not only because of the disagreement of the writers, but because revelation cannot be applied to the relating of facts by the persons who saw them done, nor to the relating or recording of any discourse or conversation by those who heard it. The books called the Acts of the Apostles, an anonymous work, belong also to the anecdotal part.

All the other parts of the New Testament, except the book of enigmas, called the Revelations, are a collection of letters under the name of Epistles; and the forgery of letters has been such a common practice in the world, that the probability is, at least, equal, whether they are genuine or forged. One thing, however, is much less equivocal, which is, that out of the matters contained in those books, together with the assistance of some old stories, the church has set up a system of religion very contradictory to the character of the person whose name it bears. It has set up a religion of pomp and of revenue, in pretended imitation of a person whose life was humility and poverty. a most miserable subterfuge th

appeared so genuine to Paine, undoubtedly; had such mani
dence upon the face of it of its being a narration of facts whic
author saw with his own eyes, was repeatedly engaged in,

The invention of a purgatory, and of the releaſing of ſouls therefrom, by prayers, bought of the church with money; the ſelling of pardons, diſpenſations, and indulgences, are revenue laws, without bearing that name or carrying that appearance. But the caſe nevertheleſs is, that thoſe things derive their origin from the proxyſm of the crucifixion, and the theory deduced therefrom, which was, that one perſon could ſtand in the place of another, and could perform meritorious ſervices for him. The probability therefore is, that the whole theory or doctrine of what is called the redemption (which is ſaid to have been accompliſhed by the act of one perſon in the room of another) was originally fabricated on purpoſe to bring forward and build all thoſe ſecondary and pecuniary redemptions upon; and that the paſſages in the books upon which the idea or theory of redemption is built, have been manufactured and fabricated for that purpoſe. Why are we to give this church credit, when ſhe tells us that thoſe books are genuine in every part, any more than we give her credit for every thing elſe ſhe has told us? or for the miracles ſhe ſays ſhe has performed? That ſhe *could* fabricate writings is certain, becauſe ſhe could write; and the compoſition of the writings in queſtion, is of that kind that any body might do it; and that ſhe *did* fabricate them, is not more inconſiſtent with probability, than that ſhe ſhould tell us, as ſhe has done, that ſhe could and did work miracles.

Since, then, no external evidence can, at this long diſtance of time, be produced to prove whether the church fabricated the doctrine called redemption, or not (for ſuch evidence, whether for or againſt, would be ſubject to the ſame ſuſpicion of being fabricated) the caſe can only be referred to the internal evidence which the thing carries of itſelf; and this affords a very ſtrong preſumption of its being a fabrication. For the internal evidence is, that the theory or doctrine of redemption has for its baſis, an idea of pecuniary juſtice, and not that of moral juſtice.

If I owe a perſon money and cannot pay him, and he threatens to put me in priſon, another perſon can take the debt upon himſelf, and pay it for me. But if I have committed a crime, every circumſtance of the caſe is changed. Moral juſtice cannot take the innocent for the guilty, even if the innocent would offer itſelf. To ſuppoſe juſtice to do this, is to deſtroy the principle of its exiſtence, which is the thing itſelf. It is then no longer juſtice. It is indiſcriminate revenge.

This ſingle reflection will ſhew that the doctrine of redemption is founded on a mere pecuniary idea correſponding to that of a debt

which another perſon might pay; and as this pecuniary idea correſponds again with the ſyſtem of ſecond redemptions, obtained through the means of money given to the church for pardons, the probability is, that the ſame perſons fabricated both the one and the other of thoſe theories; and that, in truth, there is no ſuch thing as redemption; that it is fabulous; and that man ſtands in the ſame relative condition with his Maker he ever did ſtand ſince man exiſted; and that it is his greateſt conſolation to think ſo.

Let him believe this, and he will live more conſiſtently and morally than by any other ſyſtem. It is by his being taught to contemplate himſelf as an outlaw, as an out-caſt, as a beggar, as a mumper, as one thrown, as it were, on a dung-hill, at an immenſe diſtance from his Creator, and who muſt make his approaches by creeping and cringing to intermediate beings, that he conceives either a contemptuous diſregard for every thing under the name of religion, or becomes indifferent, or turns, what he calls devout. In the latter caſe, he conſumes his life in grief, or the affectation of it. His prayers are reproaches. His humility is ingratitude. He calls himſelf a worm, and the fertile earth a dung-hill; and all the bleſſings of life by the thankleſs name of vanities. He deſpiſes the choiceſt gift of God to man, the GIFT OF REASON; and having endeavoured to force upon himſelf the belief of a ſyſtem againſt which reaſon revolts, he ungratefully calls it *human reaſon*, as if a man could give reaſon to himſelf.

Yet with all this ſtrange appearance of humility, and this contempt for human reaſon, he ventures into the boldeſt preſumptions. He finds fault with every thing. His ſelfiſhneſs is never ſatisfied; his ingratitude is never at an end. He takes on himſelf to direct the Almighty what to do, even in the government of the univerſe. He prays dictatorially. When it is ſun-ſhine he prays for rain, and when it is rain he prays for ſun-ſhine. He follows the ſame idea in every thing that he prays for; for what is the amount of all his prayers, but an attempt to make the Almighty change his mind, and act otherwiſe than he does. It is as if he were to ſay— thou knoweſt not ſo well as I.

But ſome, perhaps, will ſay,—Are we to have no God—No revelation? I anſwer, yes. There is a word of God; there is a revelation.

THE WORD OF GOD IS THE CREATION WE BEHOLD: And it is in *this word*, which no human invention can counterfeit or alter, that God ſpeaketh univerſally to man.

Human language is local and changeable, and is therefore incapable of being uſed as the means of unchangeable and univerſal information. The idea that God ſent Jeſus Chriſt to publiſh, as they ſay, the glad tidings to all nations, from one end of the earth unto the other, is conſiſtent only with the ignorance of thoſe who know nothing of the extent of the world, and who believed, as thoſe world-ſaviours believed, and continued to believe, for ſeveral centuries (and that in contradiction to the diſcoveries of philoſophers, and the experience of navigators) that the earth was flat like a trencher; and that a man might walk to the end of it.

But how was Jeſus Chriſt to make any thing known to all nations? He could ſpeak but one language, which was Hebrew; and there are in the world ſeveral hundred languages. Scarcely any two nations ſpeak the ſame language, or underſtand each other; and as to tranſlations, every man who knows any thing of languages, knows that it is impoſſible to tranſlate from one language into another, not only without loſing a great part of the original, but frequently of miſtaking the ſenſe; and beſides all this, the art of printing was wholly unknown at the time Chriſt lived.

It is always neceſſary that the means that are to accompliſh any end, be equal to the accompliſhment of that end, or the end cannot be accompliſhed. It is in this, that the difference between finite and infinite power and wiſdom diſcovers itſelf. Man frequently fails in accompliſhing his end, from a natural inability of the power to the purpoſe; and frequently from the want of wiſdom to apply power properly. But it is impoſſible for infinite power and wiſdom to fail as man faileth. The means it uſeth are always equal to the end; but human language, more eſpecially as there is not an univerſal language, is incapable of being uſed as an univerſal means of unchangeable and uniform information; and therefore it is not the means that God uſeth in manifeſting himſelf univerſally to man.

It is only in the CREATION that all our ideas and conceptions of a *word of God* can unite. The creation ſpeaketh an univerſal language, independently of human ſpeech or human language, multiplied and various as they be. It is an ever exiſting original, which every man can read. It cannot be forged, it cannot be counterfeited; it cannot be loſt; it cannot be altered; it cannot be ſuppreſſed. It does not depend upon the will of man whether it ſhall be publiſhed or not; it publiſhes itſelf from one end of the earth to the other. It preaches to all nations and to all worlds;

and this *word of God* reveals to man all that is neceſſary for man to know of God.

Do we want to contemplate his power? We ſee it in the immenſity of the creation. Do we want to contemplate his wiſdom? We ſee it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehenſible whole is governed. Do we want to contemplate his munificence? We ſee it in the abundance with which he fills the earth. Do we want to contemplate his mercy? We ſee it in his not withholding that abundance even from the unthankful. In fine, do we want to know what God is? Search not the book called the ſcripture, which any human hand might make, but the ſcripture called the Creation.

The only idea man can affix to the name of God, is, that of a *firſt cauſe*, the cauſe of all things. And incomprehenſibly difficult as it is for man to conceive what a firſt cauſe is, he arrives at a belief of it, from the ten-fold greater difficulty of diſbelieving it. It is difficult, beyond deſcription, to conceive that ſpace can have no end; but it is more difficult to conceive an end. It is difficult beyond deſcription to conceive an eternal duration of what we call time; but it is more impoſſible to conceive a time when there ſhall be no time. In like manner of reaſoning, every thing we behold carries in itſelf the internal evidence that it did not make itſelf. Every man is an evidence to himſelf, that he did not make himſelf; neither could his father make himſelf; nor his grandfather, nor any of his race; neither could any tree, plant, or animal, make itſelf; and it is the conviction ariſing from this evidence, that carries us on, as it were, by neceſſity to the belief of a firſt cauſe eternally exiſting, of a nature totally different to any material exiſtence we know of, and by the power of which all things exiſt; and this firſt cauſe man calls God.

It is only by the exerciſe of reaſon that man can diſcover God. Take away that reaſon, and he would be incapable of underſtanding any thing; and, in this caſe, it would be juſt as conſiſtent to read even the book called the Bible, to a horſe as to a man. How then is it that thoſe people pretend to reject reaſon?

Almoſt the only parts in the book, called the Bible, that convey to us any idea of God, are ſome chapters in Job, and the 19th Pſalm. I recollect no other. Thoſe parts are true *deiſtical* compoſitions; for they treat of the *Deity* through his works. They take the book of Creation as the word of God; they refer to no other book; and all the inferences they make are drawn from that volume.

I infert in this place, the 19th Pfalm, as paraphrafed into Engliſh verſe, by Addiſon. I recollect not the proſe, and where I write this, I have not the opportunity of ſeeing it.

The ſpacious firmament on high,
With all the blue etherial ſky,
And ſpangled heavens, a ſhining frame,
Their great original proclaim.
The unwearied ſun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power diſplay,
And publiſhes to every land,
The work of an Almighty hand.
Soon as the evening ſhades prevail,
The moon takes up the wond'rous tale,
And nightly to the liſtening earth,
Repeats the ſtory of her birth.
Whilſt all the ſtars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And ſpread the truth from pole to pole.
What though in ſolemn ſilence, all
Move round this dark terreſtrial ball,
What though no real voice, nor ſound,
Amidſt their radiant orbs be found,
In reaſon's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice;
For ever ſinging as they ſhine,
THE HAND THAT MADE US IS DIVINE.

What more does man want to know than that the hand, or power that made theſe things, is divine, is omnipotent. Let him believe this, with the force it is impoſſible to repel, if he permits his reaſon to act, and his rule of moral life will follow of courſe.

The alluſions in Job have all of them the ſame tendency with this Pſalm; that of deducing or proving a truth, that would be otherwiſe unknown, from truths already known.

I recollect not enough of the paſſages in Job, to inſert them correctly; but there is one that occurs to me that is applicable to the ſubject I am ſpeaking upon. "Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? Canſt thou find out the Almighty to perfection?"

+ I know not how the printers have pointed this paſſage, for I keep no Bible; but it contains two diſtinct queſtions that admit of diſtinct anſwers.

First, Canst thou by *searching* find out God? Yes. Because, in the first place, I know I did not make myself, and yet I have existence; and by *searching* into the nature of other things, I find that no other thing could make itself; and yet millions of other things exist; therefore it is, that I know, by positive conclusion resulting from this search, that there is a power superior to all those things, and that power is God.

Secondly, Canst thou find out the Almighty to *perfection?* No. Not only because the power and wisdom he has manifested in the structure of the creation that I behold, is to me incomprehensible; but because even this manifestation, great as it is, is probably but a small display of that immensity of power and wisdom, by which millions of other worlds, to me invisible by their distance, were created and continue to exist.

It is evident that both these questions were put to the reason of the person to whom they are supposed to have been addressed; and it is only by admitting the first question to be answered affirmatively, that the second could follow. It would have been unnecessary, and even absurd, to have put a second question more difficult than the first, if the first question had been answered negatively. The two questions have different objects; the first refers to the existence of God, the second to his attributes. Reason can discover the one, but it falls infinitely short in discovering the whole of the other.

I recollect not a single passage in all the writings ascribed to the men called Apostles, that convey any idea of what God is. Those writings are chiefly controversial; and the gloominess of the subject they dwell upon, that of a man dying in agony on a cross, is better suited to the gloomy genius of a monk in a cell, by whom it is not impossible they were written, than to any man breathing the open air of the creation. The only passage that occurs to me, that has any reference to the works of God, by which only his power and wisdom can be known, is related to have been spoken by Jesus Christ, as a remedy against distrustful care. "Behold the lilies of "the field, they toil not, neither do they spin." This, however, is far inferior to the allusions in Job, and in the nineteenth psalm; but it is similar in idea, and the modesty of the imagery is correspondent to the modesty of the man.

As to the Christian system of faith, it appears to me as a species of atheism; a sort of religious denial of God. It professes to believe in a man rather than in God. It is a compound made up chiefly of manism, with but little deism, and is as near to atheism as twilight

is to darkneſs. It introduces between man and his Maker an opaque body which it calls a Redeemer; as the moon introduces her opaque ſelf between the earth and the ſun, and it produces by this means a religious, or an irreligious eclipſe of light. It has put the whole orbit of reaſon into ſhade.

The effect of this obſcurity has been that of turning every thing upſide down, and repreſenting it in reverſe; and among the revolutions it has thus magically produced, it has made a revolution in Theology.

That which is now called natural philoſophy, embracing the whole circle of ſcience, of which aſtronomy occupies the chief place, is the ſtudy of the works of God and of the power and wiſdom of God in his works, and is the true theology.

As to the theology that is now ſtudied in its place, it is the ſtudy of human opinions, and of human fancies *concerning* God. It is not the ſtudy of God himſelf in the works that he has made, but in the works or writings that man has made; and it is not among the leaſt of the miſchiefs that the Chriſtian ſyſtem has done to the world, that it has abandoned the original and beautiful ſyſtem of theology, like a beautiful innocent to diſtreſs and reproach, to make room for the hag of ſuperſtition.

The book of Job, and the 19th Pſalm, which even the church admits to be more ancient than the chronological order in which they ſtand in the book called the Bible, are theological orations conformable to the original ſyſtem of theology. The internal evidence of thoſe orations proves to a demonſtration, that the ſtudy and contemplation of the works of creation, and of the power and wiſdom of God revealed and manifeſted in thoſe works, made a great part of the religious devotion of the times in which they were written; and it was this devotional ſtudy and contemplation that led to the diſcovery of the principles upon which, what are now called ſciences, are eſtabliſhed; and it is to the diſcovery of theſe principles that almoſt all the arts that contribute to the convenience of human life, owe their exiſtence. Every principal art has ſome ſcience for its parent, though the perſon who mechanically performs the work, does not always, and but very ſeldom, perceive the connection.

It is a fraud of the Chriſtian ſyſtem to call the ſciences *human inventions*; it is only the application of them that is human. Every ſcience has for its baſis a ſyſtem of principles as fixed and unalterable as thoſe by which the univerſe is regulated and governed. Man cannot make principles; he can only diſcover them:

For example. Every perſon who looks at an almanack ſees an account when an eclipſe will take place, and he ſees alſo that it never fails to take place according to the account there given. This ſhows that man is acquainted with the laws by which the heavenly bodies move. But it would be ſomething worſe than ignorance, were any church on earth to ſay, that thoſe laws are an human invention.

It would alſo be ignorance, or ſomething worſe, to ſay, that the ſcientific principles, by the aid of which man is enabled to calculate and foreknow when an eclipſe will take place, are an human invention. Man cannot invent any thing that is eternal or immutable; and the ſcientific principles he employs for this purpoſe, muſt, and are, of neceſſity, as eternal and immutable as the laws by which the heavenly bodies move, or they could not be uſed as they are, to aſcertain the time when, and the manner how, an eclipſe will take place.

The ſcientific principles that man employs to obtain the foreknowledge of an eclipſe, or of any thing elſe relating to the motion of the heavenly bodies, are contained chiefly in that part of ſcience that is called trigonometry, or the properties of a triangle, which, when applied to the ſtudy of the heavenly bodies, is called aſtronomy: when applied to direct the courſe of a ſhip on the ocean, it is called navigation; when applied to the conſtruction of figures drawn by a rule and compaſs, it is called geometry; when applied to the conſtruction of plans of edifices, it is called architecture: when applied to the meaſurement of any portion of the ſurface of the earth, it is called land ſurveying. In fine, it is the ſoul of ſcience. It is an eternal truth: It contains the *mathematical demonſtration* of which man ſpeaks, and the extent of its uſes are unknown.

It may be ſaid, that man can make or draw a triangle, and therefore a triangle is an human invention.

But the triangle, when drawn, is no other than the image of the principle: it is a delineation to the eye, and from thence to the mind, of a principle that would otherwiſe be imperceptible. The triangle does not make the principle, any more than a candle taken into a room that was dark, makes the chairs and tables, that before were inviſible. All the properties of a triangle exiſt independently of the figure, and exiſted before any triangle was drawn or thought of by man. Man had no more to do in the formation of thoſe properties, or principles, than he had to do in

making the laws by which the heavenly bodies move; and therefore the one muſt have the ſame divine origin as the other.

In the ſame manner, as it may be ſaid, that man can make a triangle, ſo alſo may it be ſaid, he can make the mechanical inſtrument, called a lever. But the principle by which the lever acts, is a thing diſtinct from the inſtrument, and would exiſt if the inſtrument did not: it attaches itſelf to the inſtrument after it is made; the inſtrument therefore can act no otherwiſe than it does act; neither can all the effort of human invention make it act otherwiſe. That which, in all ſuch caſes, man calls the *effect*, is no other than the principle itſelf rendered perceptible to the ſenſes.

Since then man cannot make principles, from whence did he gain a knowledge of them ſo as to be able to apply them, not only to things on earth, but to aſcertain the motion of bodies ſo immenſely diſtant from him as all the heavenly bodies are? From whence, I aſk, *could* he gain that knowledge, but from the ſtudy of the true theology?

It is the ſtructure of the univerſe that has taught this knowledge to man. That ſtructure is an ever exiſting exhibition of every principle upon which every part of mathematical ſcience is founded. The offspring of this ſcience is mechanics; for mechanics is no other than the principles of ſcience applied practically. The man who proportions the ſeveral parts of a mill, uſes the ſame ſcientific principles, as if he had the power of conſtructing an univerſe: but as he cannot give to matter that inviſible agency, by which all the component parts of the immenſe machine of the univerſe have influence upon each other, and act in motional uniſon together without any apparent contact, and to which man has given the name of attraction, gravitation, and repulſion, he ſupplies the place of that agency by the humble imitation of teeth and cogs. All the parts of man's microcoſm muſt viſibly touch. But could he gain a knowledge of that agency, ſo as to be able to apply it in practice, we might then ſay, that another *canonical book* of the word of God had been diſcovered.

If man could alter the properties of the lever, ſo alſo could he alter the properties of the triangle: for a lever (taking that ſort of lever, which is called a ſteel-yard for the ſake of explanation) forms, when in motion, a triangle. The line it deſcends from, (one point of that line being in the fulcrum) the line it deſcends to, and the chord of the arc, which the end of the lever deſcribes in

the air, are the three ſides of a triangle. The other arm of the lever deſcribes alſo a triangle; and the correſponding ſides of thoſe two triangles, calculated ſcientifically or meaſured geometrically; and alſo the ſines, tangents, and ſecants generated from the angles, and geometrically meaſured, have the ſame proportions to each other, as the different weights have that will balance each other on the lever, leaving the weight of the lever out of the caſe.

It may alſo be ſaid that man can make a wheel and axis, that he can put wheels of different magnitudes together, and produce a mill. Still the caſe comes back to the ſame point, which is, that he did not make the principle that gives the wheels thoſe powers. That principle is as unalterable as in the former caſes, or rather it is the ſame principle under a different appearance to the eye.

The power that two wheels, of different magnitudes, have upon each other, is in the ſame proportion as if the ſemi-diameter of the two wheels were joined together and made into that kind of lever I have deſcribed, ſuſpended at the part where the ſemi-diameters join; for the two wheels, ſcientifically conſidered, are no other than the two circles generated by the motion of the compound lever.

It is from the ſtudy of the true theology that all our knowledge of ſcience is derived, and it is from that knowledge that all the arts have originated.

The Almighty lecturer, by diſplaying the principles of ſcience in the ſtructure of the univerſe, has invited man to ſtudy and to imitation. It is as if he had ſaid to the inhabitants of this globe that we call ours, "I have made an earth for man to dwell upon, "and I have rendered the ſtarry heavens viſible, to teach him "ſcience and the arts. He can now provide for his own comfort, "AND LEARN FROM MY MUNIFICENCE TO ALL TO BE KIND "TO EACH OTHER."

Of what uſe is it, unleſs it be to teach man ſomething, that his eye is endowed with the power of beholding, to an incomprehenſible diſtance, an immenſity of worlds revolving in the ocean of ſpace; or of what uſe is it, that this immenſity of worlds is viſible to man? What has man to do with the Pleiades, with Orion, with Sirius, with the ſtar he calls the north ſtar, with the moving orbs he has named Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury, if no uſes are to follow from their being viſible? A leſs power of viſion would have been ſufficient for man, if the immenſity he now poſſeſſes were given only to waſte itſelf, as it were, on an immenſe deſert of ſpace glittering with ſhows.

It is only by contemplating what he calls the ſtarry heavens, as the book and ſchool of ſcience, that he diſcovers any uſe in their being viſible to him, or any advantage reſulting from his immenſity of viſion. But when he contemplates the ſubject in this light, he ſees an additional motive for ſaying that *nothing was made in vain;* for in vain would be this power of viſion if it taught man nothing.

As the Chriſtian ſyſtem of faith has made a revolution in theology, ſo alſo has it made a revolution in the ſtate of learning. That which is now called learning, was not learning originally. Learning does not conſiſt, as the ſchools now make it to conſiſt, in the knowledge of languages, but in the knowledge of things to which language gives names.

The Greeks were a learned people; but learning with them, did not conſiſt in ſpeaking Greek, any more than in a Roman's ſpeaking Latin, or a Frenchman's ſpeaking French, or an Engliſhman's ſpeaking Engliſh. From what we know of the Greeks, it does not appear that they knew or ſtudied any language but their own; and this was one cauſe of their becoming ſo learned; it afforded them more time to apply themſelves to better ſtudies. The ſchools of the Greeks were ſchools of ſcience and philoſophy, and not of languages: and it is in the knowledge of the things that ſcience and philoſophy teach, that learning conſiſts.

Almoſt all the ſcientific learning that now exiſts, came to us from the Greeks, or the people who ſpoke the Greek language. It therefore became neceſſary to the people of other nations, who ſpoke a different language, that ſome among them ſhould learn the Greek language, in order that the learning the Greeks had, might be made known in thoſe nations, by tranſlating the Greek books of ſcience and philoſophy into the mother tongue of each nation.

The ſtudy, therefore, of the Greek language, (and in the ſame manner for the Latin) was no other than the drudgery buſineſs of a linguiſt; and the language thus obtained, was no other than the means, or, as it were, the tools, employed to obtain the learning the Greeks had. It made no part of the learning itſelf; and was ſo diſtinct from it, as to make it exceeding probable, that the perſons who had ſtudied Greek ſufficiently, to tranſlate thoſe works, ſuch, for inſtance, as Euclid's Elements, did not underſtand any of the learning the works contained. . .

As there is now nothing new to be learned from the dead languages, all the uſeful books being already tranſlated, the languages are become

uſeleſs, and the time expended in teaching and in learning them is waſted. So far as the ſtudy of languages may contribute to the progreſs and communication of knowledge [for it has nothing to do with the *creation* of knowledge] it is only in the living languages that new knowledge is to be found; and certain it is, that in general, a youth will learn more of a living language in one year, than of a dead language in ſeven; and it is but ſeldom that the teacher knows much of it himſelf. The difficulty of learning the dead languages does not ariſe from any ſuperior abſtruſeneſs in the languages themſelves, but in their *being dead*, and the pronunciation entirely loſt. It would be the ſame with any other language when it becomes dead. The beſt Greek linguiſt that now exiſts, does not underſtand Greek ſo well as a Grecian ploughman did, or a Grecian milk-maid; and the ſame for the Latin, compared with a ploughman or a milk-maid of the Romans; and with reſpect to pronunciation, and idiom, not ſo well as the cows that ſhe milked. It would therefore be advantageous to the ſtate of learning, to aboliſh the ſtudy of the dead languages, and to make learning conſiſt, as it originally did, in ſcientific knowledge.

The apology that is ſometimes made for continuing to teach the dead languages is, that they are taught at a time when a child is not capable of exerting any other mental faculty than that of memory. But this is altogether erroneous. The human mind has a natural diſpoſition to ſcientific knowledge, and to the things connected with it. The firſt and favourite amuſement of a child, even before he begins to play, is that of imitating the works of man. It builds houſes with cards or ſticks; it navigates the little ocean of a bowl of water with a paper boat: or dams the ſtream of a gutter, and contrives ſomething which it calls a mill; and it intereſts itſelf in the fate of its works with a care that reſembles affection. It afterwards goes to ſchool, where its genius is killed by the barren ſtudy of a dead language, and the philoſopher is loſt in the linguiſt.

But the apology that is now made for continuing to teach the dead languages, could not be the cauſe at firſt of cutting down learning to the narrow and humble ſphere of linguiſtry; the cauſe, therefore muſt be ſought for elſewhere. In all reſearches of this kind, the beſt evidence that can be produced, is the internal evidence the thing carries with itſelf, and the evidence of circumſtances that unites with it, both of which, in this caſe, are not difficult to be diſcovered.

Putting then aſide, as matter of diſtinct conſideration, the outrage offered to the moral juſtice of God, by ſuppoſing him to make the innocent ſuffer for the guilty, and alſo the looſe morality and low contrivance of ſuppoſing him to change himſelf into the ſhape of a man, in order to make an excuſe to himſelf for not executing his ſuppoſed ſentence upon Adam; putting, I ſay, thoſe things aſide, as matter of diſtinct conſideration, it is certain, that what is called the Chriſtian ſyſtem of faith, including in it the whimſical account of the creation; the ſtrange ſtory of Eve, the ſnake, and the apple; the amphibious idea of a man-god; the corporeal idea of the death of a God; the mythological idea of a family of Gods; and the Chriſtian ſyſtem of arithmetic, that three are one, and one is three, are all irreconcilable, not only to the divine gift of reaſon that God has given to man, but to the knowledge that man gains of the power and wiſdom of God, by the aid of the ſciences, and by ſtudying the ſtructure of the univerſe that God has made.

The ſetters up, therefore, and the advocates of the Chriſtian ſyſtem of faith, could not but foreſee that the continually progreſſive knowledge that man would gain by the aid of ſcience, of the power and wiſdom of God, manifeſted in the ſtructure of the univerſe, and in all the works of creation, would militate againſt, and call into queſtion, the truth of their ſyſtem of faith; and therefore it became neceſſary to their purpoſe to cut learning down to a ſize leſs dangerous to their project, and this they effected by reſtricting the idea of learning to the dead ſtudy of dead languages.

They not only rejected the ſtudy of ſcience out of the Chriſtian ſchools, but they perſecuted it; and it is only within about the laſt two centuries that the ſtudy has been revived. So late as 1610, Galileo, a Florentine, diſcovered and introduced the uſe of teleſcopes, and by applying them to obſerve the motions and appearances of the heavenly bodies, afforded additional means for aſcertaining the true ſtructure of the univerſe. Inſtead of being eſteemed for theſe diſcoveries, he was ſentenced to renounce them, or the opinions reſulting from them, as a damnable hereſy. And prior to that time, Vigilius was condemned to be burned for aſſerting the antipodes, or in other words, that the earth was a globe, and habitable in every part where there was land; yet the truth of this is now too well known even to be told.

If the belief of errors, not morally bad, did no miſchief, it would make no part of the moral duty of man to oppoſe and remove them.

There was no moral ill in believing the earth was flat like a trencher, any more than there was moral virtue in believing it was round like a globe; neither was there any moral ill in believing that the creator made no other world than this, any more than there was moral virtue in believing that he made millions, and that the infinity of ſpace is filled with worlds. But when a ſyſtem of religion is made to grow out of a ſuppoſed ſyſtem of creation that is not true, and to unite itſelf therewith in a manner almoſt inſeparable therefrom, the caſe aſſumes an entirely different ground. It is then that errors, not morally bad, become fraught with the ſame miſchiefs as if they were. It is then that the truth, though otherwiſe indifferent in itſelf, becomes an eſſential, by becoming the criterion, that either confirms by correſponding evidence, or denies by contradictory evidence, the reality of the religion itſelf. In this view of the caſe it is the moral duty of man to obtain every poſſible evidence, that the ſtructure of the heavens, or any other part of creation affords, with reſpect to ſyſtems of religion. But this, the ſupporters or partizans of the Chriſtian ſyſtem, as if dreading the reſult, inceſſantly oppoſed, and not only rejected the ſciences, but perſecuted the profeſſors. Had Newton or Deſcartes lived three or four hundred years ago, and purſued their ſtudies as they did, it is moſt probable that they would not have lived to have finiſhed them; and had Franklin drawn lightning from the clouds at the ſame time, it would have been at the hazard of expiring for it in flames.

Latter times have laid all the blame upon the Goths and Vandals, but, however unwilling the partizans of the Chriſtian ſyſtem may be to believe or to acknowledge it, it is nevertheleſs true, that the age of ignorance commenced with the Chriſtian ſyſtem. There was more knowledge in the world before that period than for many centuries afterwards; and as to religious knowledge, the Chriſtian ſyſtem, as already ſaid, was only another ſpecies of mythology; and the mythology to which it ſucceeded, was a corruption of an ancient ſyſtem of theiſm.*

* *It is impoſſible for us now to know at what time the heathen mythology began; but it is certain, from the internal evidence that it carries, that it did not begin in the ſame ſtate or condition in which it ended. All the gods of that mythology, except Saturn, were of modern invention. The ſuppoſed reign of Saturn was prior to that which is called the heathen mythology, and was ſo far a ſpecies of theiſm, that*

It is owing to this long interregnum of ſcience, *and to no other cauſe*, that we have now to look back through a vaſt chaſm of many hundred years to the reſpectable characters we call the ancients. Had the progreſſion of knowledge gone on proportionably with the ſtock that before exiſted, that chaſm would have been filled up with characters riſing ſuperior in knowledge to each other; and thoſe ancients, we now ſo much admire, would have appeared reſpectably in the back ground of the ſcene. But the Chriſtian ſyſtem laid all waſte; and if we take our ſtand about the beginning of the ſixteenth century, we look back through that long chaſm, to the times of the ancients, as over a vaſt ſandy deſart, in which not a ſhrub appears to intercept the viſion to the fertile hills beyond.

It is an inconſiſtency, ſcarcely poſſible to be credited, that any thing ſhould exiſt under the name of a *religion*, that held it to be *irreligious* to ſtudy, and contemplate the ſtructure of the univerſe that God had made. But the fact is too well eſtabliſhed to be denied. The event that ſerved more than any other, to break the firſt link in this long chain of deſpotic ignorance, is that known by the name of the reformation by Luther. From that time, though it does not appear to have made any part of the intention of Luther,

it admitted the belief of only one God. Saturn is ſuppoſed to have abdicated the government in favour of his three ſons and one daughter. Jupiter, Pluto, Neptune and Juno; after this, thouſands of other gods and demi-gods were imaginarily created, and the calendar of gods increaſed as faſt as the calendar of ſaints, and the calendar of courts have increaſed ſince.

All the corruptions that have taken place in theology, and in religion, have been produced by admitting of what man calls revealed religion. *The mythologiſts pretended to more revealed religion than the Chriſtians do. They had their oracles and their prieſts, who were ſuppoſed to receive and deliver the word of God verbally on almoſt all occaſions.*

Since then all corruptions, down from Moloch to modern predeſtinarianiſm, and from the human ſacrifices of the heathens to the Chriſtian ſacrifice of the Creator, have been produced by admitting what is called revealed religion, *the moſt effectual means to prevent all ſuch evils and impoſitions, is not to admit of any other revelation than that which is manifeſted in the book of Creation; and to contemplate the Creation, as the only true and real word of God that ever did or ever will exiſt, and that every thing elſe, called the word of God, is fable and impoſition.*

or of those who are called reformers, the Sciences began to revive, and Liberality, their natural associate, began to appear. This was the only public good the reformation did; for with respect to religious good, it might as well not have taken place. The mythology still continued the same; and a multiplicity of national popes grew out of the downfal of the Pope of Christendom.

Having thus shewn, from the internal evidence of things, the cause that produced a change in the state of learning, and the motive for substituting the study of the dead languages in the place of the Sciences, I proceed, in addition to the several observations already made in the former part of this work, to compare, or rather to confront, the evidence that the structure of the universe affords, with the Christian system of religion. But as I cannot begin this part better than by referring to the ideas that occurred to me at an early part of life, and which I doubt not have occurred in some degree to almost every other person at one time or other, I shall state what those ideas were, and add thereto such other matter as shall arise out of the subject, giving to the whole, by way of preface, a short introduction.

My father being of the quaker profession, it was my good fortune to have an exceedingly good moral education, and a tolerable stock of useful learning. Though I went to the grammar school,* I did not learn Latin, not only because I had no inclination to learn languages, but because of the objection the Quakers have against the books in which the language is taught. But this did not prevent me from being acquainted with the subjects of all the Latin books used in the school.

The natural bent of my mind was to science. I had some turn, and I believe some talent, for poetry; but this I rather repressed than encouraged, as leading too much into the field of imagination. As soon as I was able I purchased a pair of globes, and attended the philosophical lectures of Martin and Ferguson, and became afterwards acquainted with Dr. Bevis, of the society called the Royal Society, then living in the Temple, and an excellent astronomer.

I had no disposition for what was called politics. It presented to my mind no other idea than is contained in the word Jockeyship. When, therefore, I turned my thoughts towards matters of govern-

* *The same school, Thetford, in Norfolk, that the present counsellor Mingay went to, and under the same master.*

ment, I had to form a ſyſtem for myſelf, that accorded with the moral and philoſophic principles in which I had been educated. I ſaw, or at leaſt I thought I ſaw, a vaſt ſcene opening itſelf to the world in the affairs of America; and it appeared to me, that unleſs the Americans changed the plan they were then purſuing, with reſpect to the government of England, and declared themſelves independent, they would not only involve themſelves in a multiplicity of new difficulties, but ſhut out the proſpect that was then offering itſelf to mankind through their means. It was from theſe motives that I publiſhed the work known by the name of *Common Senſe*, which is the firſt work I ever did publiſh: and ſo far as I can judge of myſelf, I believe I never ſhould have been known in the world as an author on any ſubject whatever, had it not been for the affairs of America. I wrote *Common Senſe* the latter end of the year 1775, and publiſhed it the firſt of January, 1776. Independence was declared the fourth of July following.

Any perſon who has made obſervations on the ſtate and progreſs of the human mind, by obſerving his own, cannot but have obſerved, that there are two diſtinct claſſes of what we call Thoughts: thoſe that we produce in ourſelves by reflection and the act of thinking, and thoſe that bolt into the mind of their own accord. I have always made it a rule to treat thoſe voluntary viſitors with civility, taking care to examine, as well as I was able, if they were worth entertaining; and it is from them I have acquired almoſt all the knowledge that I have. As to the learning that any perſon gains from ſchool education, it ſerves only, like a ſmall capital, to put him in the way of beginning learning for himſelf afterwards. Every perſon of learning is finally his own teacher; the reaſon of which is, that principles, being of a diſtinct quality to circumſtances, cannot be impreſſed upon the memory. Their place of mental reſidence is the underſtanding, and they are never ſo laſting as when they begin by conception. Thus much for the introductory part.

From the time I was capable of conceiving an idea, and acting upon it by reflection, I either doubted the truth of the Chriſtian ſyſtem, or thought it to be a ſtrange affair; I ſcarcely know which it was: but I well remember, when about ſeven or eight years of age, hearing a ſermon read by a relation of mine, who was a great devotee of the church, upon the ſubject of what is called *Redemption by the Death of the Son of God*. After the ſermon was ended, I went into the garden, and as I was going down the garden ſteps

(for I perfectly recollect the ſpot) I revolted at the recollection of what I had heard, and thought to myſelf that it was making God Almighty act like a paſſionate man that killed his ſon when he could not revenge himſelf any other way; and as I was ſure a man would be hanged that did ſuch a thing, I could not ſee for what purpoſe they preached ſuch ſermons. This was not one of thoſe kind of thoughts that had any thing in it of childiſh levity; it was to me a ſerious reflection ariſing from the idea I had, that God was too good to do ſuch an action, and alſo too Almighty to be under any neceſſity of doing it. I believe in the ſame manner to this moment; and I moreover believe, that any ſyſtem of religion that has any thing in it that ſhocks the mind of a child, cannot be a true ſyſtem.

It ſeems as if parents of the Chriſtian profeſſion were aſhamed to tell their children any thing about the principles of their religion. They ſometimes inſtruct them in morals, and talk to them of the goodneſs of what they call Providence; for the Chriſtian mythology has five deities: there is God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghoſt, the God Providence, and the Goddeſs Nature. But the Chriſtian ſtory of God the Father putting his ſon to death, or employing people to do it (for that is the plain language of the ſtory) cannot be told by a parent to a child; and to tell him that it was done to make mankind happier and better, is making the ſtory ſtill worſe, as if mankind could be improved by the example of murder; and to tell him that all this is a myſtery, is only making an excuſe for the incredibility of it.

How different is this to the pure and ſimple profeſſion of Deiſm! The true deiſt has but one Deity; and his religion conſiſts in contemplating the power, wiſdom, and benignity of the Deity in his works, and in endeavouring to imitate him in every thing moral, ſcientifical, and mechanical.

The religion that approaches the neareſt of all others to true deiſm, in the moral and benign part thereof, is that profeſſed by the Quakers, but they have contracted themſelves too much by leaving the works of God out of their ſyſtem. Though I reverence their philanthropy, I cannot help ſmiling at the conceit, that if the taſte of a Quaker could have been conſulted at the creation, what a ſilent and drab-coloured creation it would have been. Not a flower would have bloſſomed its gaities; nor a bird been permitted to ſing.

Quitting theſe reflections, I proceed to other matters. After I

had made myſelf maſter of the uſe of the globes and of the orrery,* and conceived an idea of the infinity of ſpace, and of the eternal diviſibility of matter, and obtained, at leaſt, a general knowledge of what is called natural philoſophy, I began to compare, or, as I have before ſaid, to confront, the internal evidence thoſe things afford with the Chriſtian ſyſtem of faith.

Though it is not a direct article of the Chriſtian ſyſtem that this world that we inhabit is the whole of the habitable creation, yet it is ſo worked up therewith, from what is called the Moſaic account of the creation, the ſtory of Eve and the apple, and the counterpart of that ſtory, the death of the ſon of God, that to believe otherwiſe, that is, to believe that God created a plurality of worlds, at leaſt as numerous as what we call ſtars, renders the Chriſtian ſyſtem of faith at once little and ridiculous; and ſcatters it in the mind like feathers in the air. The two beliefs cannot be held together in the ſame mind; and he who thinks that he believes both, has thought but little of either.

Though the belief of a plurality of worlds was familiar to the ancients, it is only within the laſt three centuries that the extent and dimenſions of this globe that we inhabit, have been aſcertained. Several veſſels, following the tract of the ocean, have ſailed entirely round the world, as a man may march in a circle, and come round by the contrary ſide of the circle, to the ſpot he ſet out from. The circular dimenſions of our world in the wideſt part, as a man would meaſure the wideſt round of an apple or a ball, is only twenty-five thouſand and twenty Engliſh miles, reckoning ſixty-nine miles and an half to an equatorial degree, and may be ſailed round in the ſpace of about three years.†

* *As this book may fall into the hands of perſons who do not know what an orrery is, it is for their information I add this note, as the name gives no idea of the uſes of the thing. The orrery has its name from the perſon who invented it. It is a machinery of clock-work repreſenting the univerſe in miniature; and in which the revolution of the earth round itſelf and round the ſun, the revolution of the moon round the earth, the revolution of the planets round the ſun, their relative diſtances from the ſun as the centre of the whole ſyſtem, their relative diſtances from each other, and their different magnitudes, are repreſented as they really exiſt in what we call the heavens.*

† *Allowing a ſhip to ſail, on an average, three miles in an hour,*

A world of this extent may, at firſt thought, appear to us to be great; but if we compare it with the immenſity of ſpace in which it is ſuſpended, like a bubble or a balloon in the air, it is infinitely leſs in proportion than the ſmalleſt grain of ſand is to the ſize of the world, or the fineſt particle of dew to the whole ocean; and is therefore but ſmall; and, as will be hereafter ſhewn, is only *one* of a ſyſtem of worlds, of which the univerſal creation is compoſed.

It is not difficult to gain ſome faint idea of the immenſity of ſpace in which this and all the other worlds are ſuſpended, if we follow a progreſſion of ideas. When we think of the ſize or dimenſions of a room, our ideas limit themſelves to the walls, and there they ſtop. But when our eye, or our imagination, darts into ſpace, that is, when it looks upward into what we call the open air, we cannot conceive any walls or boundaries it can have; and if for the ſake of reſting our ideas, we ſuppoſe a boundary, the queſtion immediately renews itſelf, and aſks, what is beyond that boundary And in the ſame manner, what is beyond the next boundary? And ſo on, till the fatigued imagination returns and ſays, *there is no end.* Certainly, then, the Creator was not pent for room when he made this world no larger than it is; and we have to ſeek the reaſon in ſomething elſe.

If we take a ſurvey of our own world, or rather of this, of which the Creator has given us the uſe, as our portion in the immenſe ſyſtem of creation, we find every part of it, the earth, the waters, and the air that ſurround it, filled, and, as it were, crouded with life, down from the largeſt animals that we know of, to the ſmalleſt inſects the naked eye can behold, and from thence to others ſtill ſmaller, and totally inviſible without the aſſiſtance of the microſcope. Every tree, every plant, every leaf, ſerves not only as an habitation, but as a world to ſome numerous race, till animal exiſtence becomes ſo exceedingly refined, that the effluvia of a blade of graſs would be food for thouſands.

Since then no part of our earth is left unoccupied, why is it to be ſuppoſed, that the immenſity of ſpace is a naked void, lying in eternal waſte? There is room for millions of worlds as large or larger than ours, and each of them millions of miles apart from each other.

ſhe would ſail entirely round the world in leſs than one year, if ſhe could ſail in a direct circle; but ſhe is obliged to follow the courſe of the ocean.

Having now arrived at this point, if we carry our ideas only one thought further, we ſhall ſee, perhaps, the true reaſon, at leaſt a very good reaſon for our happineſs, why the Creator, inſtead of making one immenſe world, extending over an immenſe quantity of ſpace, has preferred dividing that quantity of matter into ſeveral diſtinct and ſeparate worlds, which we call planets, of which our earth is one. But before I explain my ideas upon this ſubject, it is neceſſary (not for the ſake of thoſe that already know, but for thoſe who do not) to ſhew what the ſyſtem of the univerſe is.

That part of the univerſe that is called the ſolar ſyſtem (meaning the ſyſtem of worlds to which our earth belongs, and of which Sol, or in Engliſh language the Sun, is the centre) conſiſts, beſides the Sun, of ſix diſtinct orbs, or planets, or worlds, beſides the ſecondary bodies, called ſatellites, or moons, of which our earth has one that attends her in her annual revolution round the ſun, in like manner as the other ſatellites, or moons, attend the planets, or worlds, to which they ſeverally belong, as may be ſeen by the aſſiſtance of the teleſcope.

The Sun is the centre, round which thoſe ſix worlds, or planets, revolve at different diſtances therefrom, and in circles concentric to each other. Each world keeps conſtantly in nearly the ſame tract round the Sun, and continues, at the ſame time, turning round itſelf, in nearly an upright poſition, as a top turns round itſelf when it is ſpinning on the ground, and leans a little ſideways.

It is this leaning of the earth, ($23\frac{1}{2}$ degrees) that occaſions ſummer and winter, and the different length of days and nights. If the earth turned round itſelf in a poſition perpendicular to the plane or level of the circle it moves in round the ſun, as a top turns round when it ſtands erect on the ground, the days and nights would be always of the ſame length, twelve hours day, and twelve hours night, and the ſeaſon would be uniformly the ſame throughout the year.

Every time that a planet (our earth for example) turns round itſelf, it makes what we call day and night; and every time it goes entirely round the ſun, it makes what we call a year, conſequently our world turns three hundred and ſixty-five times round itſelf, in going once round the ſun.*

* *Thoſe who ſuppoſed that the Sun went round the earth every 24 hours, made the ſame miſtake in idea, that a cook would do in fact, that ſhould make the fire go round the meat, inſtead of the meat turning itſelf round towards the fire.*

The names that the ancients gave to thoſe ſix worlds, and which are ſtill called by the ſame names, are Mercury, Venus, this world that we call ours, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. They appear larger to the eye than the ſtars, being many million miles nearer to our earth than any of the ſtars are. The planet Venus is that which is called the Evening Star, and ſometimes the Morning Star, as ſhe happens to be ſet after, or riſe before the ſun, which, in either caſe, is never more than three hours.

The ſun, as before ſaid, being the centre, the planet, or world, neareſt the ſun, is Mercury; his diſtance from the ſun is thirty-four million miles, and he moves round in a circle always at that diſtance from the ſun, as a top may be ſuppoſed to ſpin round in the tract in which a horſe goes in a mill. The ſecond world is Venus; ſhe is fifty-ſeven million miles diſtant from the ſun, and conſequently moves round in a circle much greater than that of Mercury. The third world is this that we inhabit, and which is eighty-eight million miles diſtant from the ſun, and conſequently moves round in a circle greater than that of Venus. The fourth world is Mars; he is diſtant from the ſun one hundred and thirty-four million miles, and conſequently moves round in a circle greater than that of our earth. The fifth is Jupiter: he is diſtant from the ſun five hundred and fifty-ſeven million miles, and conſequently moves round in a circle greater than that of Mars. The ſixth world is Saturn; he is diſtant from the ſun ſeven hundred and ſixty-three million miles, and conſequently moves round in a circle that ſurrounds the circles or orbits of all the other worlds or planets.

The ſpace, therefore, in the air, or in the immenſity of ſpace, that our ſolar ſyſtem takes up for the ſeveral worlds to perform their revolutions in round the ſun, is of the extent in a ſtrait line of the whole diameter of the orbit or circle, in which Saturn moves round the ſun, which being double his diſtance from the ſun, is fifteen hundred and twenty-ſix million miles; and its circular extent is nearly five thouſand million, and its globical content is almoſt three thouſand five hundred million times three thouſand five hundred million ſquare miles.*

* *If it ſhould be aſked, how can man know theſe things? I have one plain anſwer to give, which is, that man knows how to calculate an eclipſe, and alſo how to calculate, to a minute of time, when the planet Venus, in making her revolutions round the Sun, will come in a ſtrait line between our earth and the ſun, and will appear to us*

But this, immenſe as it is, is only one ſyſtem of worlds. Beyond this, at a vaſt diſtance into ſpace, far beyond all power of calculation, are the ſtars called the fixed ſtars. They are called fixed, becauſe they have no revolutionary motion, as the ſix worlds, or planets have that I have been deſcribing. Thoſe fixed ſtars continue always at the ſame diſtance from each other, and always in the ſame place, as the ſun does in the centre of our ſyſtem. The probability, therefore, is, that each of thoſe fixed ſtars is alſo a ſun, round which another ſyſtem of worlds, or planets, though too remote for us to diſcover, performs its revolutions, as our ſyſtem of worlds does round our central ſun.

By this eaſy progreſſion of ideas, the immenſity of ſpace will appear to us to be filled with ſyſtems of worlds; and that no part of ſpace lies at waſte, any more than any part of our globe of earth and water is left unoccupied.

Having thus endeavoured to convey, in a familiar and eaſy manner, ſome idea of the ſtructure of the univerſe, I return to explain what I before alluded to, namely, the great benefits ariſing to man in conſequence of the Creator having made a *plurality* of worlds, ſuch as our ſyſtem is, conſiſting of a central ſun and ſix worlds, beſides ſatellites, in preference to that of creating one world only of a vaſt extent.

It is an idea I have never loſt ſight of, that all our knowledge of ſcience is derived from the revolutions (exhibited to our eye, and from thence to our underſtanding) which thoſe ſeveral planets, or worlds, of which our ſyſtem is compoſed, make in their circuit round the ſun.

Had then the quantity of matter which theſe ſix worlds contain,

about the ſize of a large pea paſſing acroſs the face of the ſun. This happens but twice in about an hundred years, at the diſtance of about eight years from each other, and has happened twice in our time, both of which were fore-known by calculation. It can alſo be known when they will happen again for a thouſand years to come, or to any other portion of time. As, therefore, man could not be able to do thoſe things if he did not underſtand the ſolar ſyſtem, and the manner in which the revolutions of the ſeveral planets or worlds are performed, the fact of calculating an eclipſe or a tranſit of Venus, is a proof in point that the knowledge exiſts; and as to a few thouſand, or even a few million miles, more or leſs, it makes ſcarcely any ſenſible difference in ſuch immenſe diſtances.

been blended into one ſolitary globe, the conſequence to us would have been, that either no revolutionary motion would have exiſted, or not a ſufficiency of it to give us the ideas and the knowledge of ſcience we now have; and it is from the ſciences that all the mechanical arts that contribute ſo much to our earthly felicity and comfort are derived.

As therefore the Creator made nothing in vain, ſo alſo muſt it be believed that he organized the ſtructure of the univerſe in the moſt advantageous manner for the benefit of man; and as we ſee, and from experience feel, the benefits we derive from the ſtructure of the univerſe, formed as it is, which benefits we ſhould not have had the opportunity of enjoying, if the ſtructure, ſo far as relates to our ſyſtem, had been a ſolitary globe, we can diſcover, at leaſt, one reaſon why a *plurality* of worlds has been made, and that reaſon calls forth the devotional gratitude of man, as well as his admiration.

But it is not to us, the inhabitants of this globe, only, that the benefits ariſing from a plurality of worlds are limited. The inhabitants of each of the worlds, of which our ſyſtem is compoſed, enjoy the ſame opportunities of knowledge as we do. They behold the revolutionary motions of our earth, as we behold theirs. All the planets revolve in ſight of each other; and therefore the ſame univerſal ſchool of ſcience preſents itſelf to all.

Neither does the knowledge ſtop here. The ſyſtem of worlds next to us, exhibits in its revolutions, the ſame principles and ſchool of ſcience to the inhabitants of their ſyſtem, as our ſyſtem does to us, and in like manner throughout the immenſity of ſpace.

Our ideas, not only of the Almightineſs of the Creator, but of his wiſdom and his beneficence, become enlarged in proportion as we contemplate the extent and the ſtructure of the univerſe. The ſolitary idea of a ſolitary world rolling, or at reſt, in the immenſe ocean of ſpace, gives place to the chearful idea of a ſociety of worlds, ſo happily contrived, as to adminiſter, even by their motion, inſtruction to man. We ſee our own earth filled with abundance; but we forget to conſider how much of that abundance is owing to the ſcientific knowledge the vaſt machinery of the univerſe has unfolded.

But, in the midſt of thoſe reflections, what are we to think of the Chriſtian ſyſtem of faith that forms itſelf upon the idea of only one world, and that of no greater extent, as is before ſhewn, than twenty-five thouſand miles. An extent, which a man walking at the rate of three miles an hour, for twelve hours in the day, could

he keep on in a circular direction, would walk entirely round in leſs than two years. Alas! what is this to the mighty ocean of ſpace, and the Almighty power of the Creator!

From whence then could ariſe the ſolitary and ſtrange conceit that the Almighty, who had millions of worlds equally dependent on his protection, ſhould quit the care of all the reſt, and come to die in our world, becauſe, they ſay, one man and one woman had eaten an apple. And, on the other hand, are we to ſuppoſe that every world, in the boundleſs creation, had an Eve, an apple, a ſerpent, and a redeemer. In this caſe, the perſon who is irreverently called the Son of God, and ſometimes God himſelf, would have nothing elſe to do than to travel from world to world, in an endleſs ſucceſſion of death, with ſcarcely a momentary interval of life.

It has been, by rejecting the evidence, that the word, or works of God in the creation, affords to our ſenſes, and the action of our reaſon upon that evidence, that ſo many wild and whimſical ſyſtems of faith and of religion, have been fabricated and ſet up. There may be many ſyſtems of religion, that ſo far from being morally bad, are in many reſpects morally good: but there can be but ONE that is true; and that one, neceſſarily muſt, as it ever will, be in all things conſiſtent with the ever exiſting word of God that we behold in his works. But ſuch is the ſtrange conſtruction of the Chriſtian ſyſtem of faith, that every evidence the heavens affords to man, either directly contradicts it, or renders it abſurd.

It is poſſible to believe, and I always feel pleaſure in encouraging myſelf to believe it, that there have been men in the world who perſuaded themſelves that, what is called a *pious fraud*, might, at leaſt, under particular circumſtances, be productive of ſome good. But the fraud being once eſtabliſhed, could not afterwards be explained; for it is with a pious fraud, as with a bad action, it begets a calamitous neceſſity of going on.

The perſons who firſt preached the Chriſtian ſyſtem of faith, and in ſome meaſure combined with it the morality preached by Jeſus Chriſt, might perſuade themſelves that it was better than the heathen mythology that then prevailed. From the firſt preachers, the fraud went on to the ſecond, and to the third, till the idea of its being a pious fraud became loſt in the belief of its being true; and that belief came again encouraged by the intereſt of thoſe who made a livelihood by preaching it.

But though ſuch a belief might, by ſuch means, be rendered

almoſt general among the laity, it is next to impoſſible to account for the continual perſecution carried on by the church, for ſeveral hundred years, againſt the ſciences and againſt the profeſſors of ſcience, if the church had not ſome record or ſome tradition, that it was originally no other than a pious fraud, or did not foreſee, that it could not be maintained againſt the evidence that the ſtructure of the univerſe afforded.

Having thus ſhewn the irreconcileable inconſiſtencies between the real word of God exiſting in the univerſe, and that which is called, *the word of God*, as ſhewn to us in a printed book, that any man might make, I proceed to ſpeak of the three principal means that have been employed in all ages, and perhaps in all countries, to impoſe upon mankind.

Thoſe three means are, Myſtery, Miracle, and Prophecy. The two firſt are incompatible with true religion, and the third ought always to be ſuſpected.

With reſpect to myſtery, every thing we behold is, in one ſenſe, a myſtery to us. Our own exiſtence is a myſtery: the whole vegetable world is a myſtery. We cannot account how it is that an acorn, when put into the ground, is made to develop itſelf, and become an oak. We know not how it is that the ſeed we ſow unfolds and multiplies itſelf, and returns to us ſuch an abundant intereſt for ſo ſmall a capital.

The fact, however, as diſtinct from the operating cauſe, is not a myſtery becauſe we ſee it; and we know alſo the means we are to uſe, which is no other than putting the ſeed in the ground. We know therefore as much as is neceſſary for us to know; and that part of the operation that we do not know, and which if we did, we could not perform, the Creator takes upon himſelf and performs it for us. We are therefore better off than if we had been let into the ſecret, and left to do it for ourſelves.

But though every created thing is in this ſenſe a myſtery, the word myſtery cannot be applied to *moral truth*, any more than obſcurity can be applied to light. The God in whom we believe is a God of moral truth, and not a God of myſtery or obſcurity. Myſtery is the antagoniſt of truth. It is a fog of human invention, that obſcures truth and repreſents it in diſtortion. Truth never envelopes *itſelf* in myſtery; and the myſtery in which it is at any time enveloped, is the work of its antagoniſt, and never of itſelf.

Religion, therefore, being the belief of a God, and the practice of moral truth, cannot have connection with myſtery. The belief

of a God, ſo far from having any thing of myſtery in it, is of all beliefs the moſt eaſy, becauſe it ariſes to us, as is before obſerved, out of neceſſity. And the practice of moral truth, or in other words, a practical imitation of the moral goodneſs of God, is no other than our acting towards each other, as he acts benignly towards all. We cannot *ſerve* God in the manner we ſerve thoſe who cannot do without ſuch ſervice; and, therefore, the only idea we can have of ſerving God, is that of contributing to the happineſs of the living creation that God has made. This cannot be done by retiring ourſelves from the ſociety of the world, and ſpending a recluſe life in ſelfiſh devotion.

The very nature and deſign of religion, if I may ſo expreſs it, prove, even to demonſtration, that it muſt be free from every thing of myſtery, and unincumbered with every thing that is myſterious. Religion, conſidered as a duty, is incumbent upon every living ſoul alike, and therefore muſt be on a level to the underſtanding and comprehenſion of all. Man does not learn religion as he learns the ſecrets and myſteries of a trade. He learns the theory of religion by reflection. It ariſes out of the action of his own mind upon the things which he ſees, or upon what he may happen to hear or to read, and the practice joins itſelf thereto.

When men, whether from policy or pious fraud, ſet up ſyſtems of religion incompatible with the word or works of God in the creation, and not only above, but repugnant to human comprehenſion, they were under the neceſſity of inventing, or adopting, a word that ſhould ſerve as a bar to all queſtions, enquiries, and ſpeculations. The word *myſtery* anſwered this purpoſe; and thus it has happened, that religion, which, in itſelf, is without myſtery, has been corrupted into a fog of myſteries.

As *myſtery* anſwered all general purpoſes, *miracle* followed as an occaſional auxiliary. The former ſerved to bewilder the mind, the latter to puzzle the ſenſes. The one was the lingo; the other the legerdemain.

But before going further into this ſubject, it will be proper to enquire what is to be underſtood by a miracle.

In the ſame ſenſe that every thing may be ſaid to be a myſtery, ſo alſo may it be ſaid, that every thing is a miracle, and that no one thing is a greater miracle than another. The elephant, though larger, is not a greater miracle than a mite; nor a mountain a greater miracle than an atom. To an Almighty power, it is no more difficult to make the one than the other; and no more difficult to

make a million of worlds than to make one. Every thing therefore is a miracle in one ſenſe; whilſt, in the other ſenſe, there is no ſuch thing as a miracle. It is a miracle when compared to our power, and to our comprehenſion. It is not a miracle compared to the power that performs it. But as nothing in this deſcription conveys the idea that is affixed to the word miracle, it is neceſſary to carry the enquiry further.

Mankind have conceived to themſelves certain laws by which, what they call nature, is ſuppoſed to act; and that a miracle is ſomething contrary to the operation and effect of thoſe laws. But unleſs we know the whole extent of thoſe laws, and of what are commonly called the powers of nature, we are not able to judge whether any thing that may appear to us wonderful, or miraculous, be within, or be beyond, or be contrary to her natural power of acting.

The aſcenſion of a man ſeveral miles high into the air, would have every thing in it that conſtitutes the idea of a miracle, if it were not known that a ſpecies of air can be generated ſeveral times lighter than the common atmoſpheric air, and yet poſſeſs elaſticity enough to prevent the balloon, in which that light air is encloſed, from being compreſſed into as many times leſs bulk, by the common air that ſurrounds it. In like manner, extracting flaſhes or ſparks of fire from the human body, as viſibly as from a ſteel ſtruck with a flint, and cauſing iron or ſteel to move without any viſible agent, would alſo give the idea of a miracle, if we were not acquainted with electricity and magnetiſm: ſo alſo would many other experiments in natural philoſophy, to thoſe who are not acquainted with the ſubject. The reſtoring perſons to life, who are to appearance dead, as is practiſed upon drowned perſons, would alſo be a miracle, if it were not known that animation is capable of being ſuſpended without being extinct.

Beſides theſe, there are performances by ſlight of hand, and by perſons acting in concert, that have a miraculous appearance, which, when known, are thought nothing of. And beſides theſe, there are mechanical and optical deceptions. There is now an exhibition in Paris of ghoſts or ſpectres, which, though it is not impoſed upon the ſpectators as a fact, has an aſtoniſhing appearance. As therefore, we know not the extent to which either nature or art can go, there is no poſitive criterion to determine what a miracle is; and mankind, in giving credit to appearances, under the idea of their being miracles, are ſubject to be continually impoſed upon.

Since then appearances are ſo capable of deceiving, and things not real have a ſtrong reſemblance to things that are, nothing can be more inconſiſtent than to ſuppoſe, that the Almighty would make uſe of means, ſuch as are called miracles, that would ſubject the perſon who performed them to the ſuſpicion of being an impoſtor, and the perſons who related them to be ſuſpected of lying, and the doctrine intended to be ſupported thereby, to be ſuſpected as a fabulous invention.

Of all the modes of evidence that ever were invented to obtain belief to any ſyſtem or opinion, to which the name of religion has been given, that of *miracle*, however ſucceſsful the impoſition may have been, is the moſt inconſiſtent. For, in the firſt place, whenever recourſe is had to ſhow, for the purpoſe of procuring that belief, (for a miracle, under any idea of the word, is a ſhow) it implies a lameneſs or weakneſs in the doctrine that is preached. And, in the ſecond place, it is degrading the Almighty into the character of a ſhow-man, playing tricks to amuſe and make the people ſtare and wonder. It is alſo the moſt equivocal ſort of evidence that can be ſet up; for the belief is not to depend upon the thing called a miracle, but upon the credit of the reporter, who ſays that he ſaw it; and therefore the thing, were it true, would have no better chance of being believed than if it were a lie.

Suppoſe I were to ſay, that when I ſat down to write this book, a hand preſented itſelf in the air, took up the pen, and wrote every word that is herein written; would any body believe me? Certainly they would not. Would they believe me a whit the more if the thing had been a fact? Certainly they would not. Since then, a real miracle, were it to happen, would be ſubject to the ſame fate as the falſhood, the inconſiſtency becomes the greater, of ſuppoſing the Almighty would make uſe of means that would not anſwer the purpoſe for which they were intended, even if they were real.

If we are to ſuppoſe a miracle to be ſomething ſo entirely out of the courſe of what is called nature, that ſhe muſt go out of that courſe to accompliſh it; and we ſee an account given of ſuch miracle by the perſon who ſaid he ſaw it, it raiſes a queſtion in the mind very eaſily decided, which is,—Is it more probable that nature ſhould go out of her courſe, or that a man ſhould tell a lie? We have never ſeen, in our time, nature go out of her courſe, but we have good reaſon to believe that millions of lies have been told in the ſame time; it is therefore at leaſt millions to one, that the reporter of a miracle tells a lie.

The ſtory of the whale ſwallowing Jonah, though a whale is large enough to do it, borders greatly on the marvellous; but it would have approached nearer to the idea of a miracle, if Jonah had ſwallowed the whale. In this caſe, which may ſerve for all caſes of miracles, the matter would decide itſelf as before ſtated, namely, Is it more probable that a man ſhould have ſwallowed a whale, or told a lie?

But ſuppoſing that Jonah had really ſwallowed the whale, and gone with it in his belly to Nineveh, and to convince the people that it was true, have caſt it up in their ſight of the full length and ſize of a whale, would they not have believed him to have been the devil inſtead of a prophet? or, if the whale had carried Jonah to Nineveh, and caſt him up in the ſame public manner, would they not have believed the whale to have been the devil, and Jonah one of his imps?

The moſt extraordinary of all the things called miracles, related in the New Teſtament, is that of the devil flying away with Jeſus Chriſt, and carrying him up to the top of a high mountain; and to the top of the higheſt pinnacle of the temple, and ſhewing him and promiſing to him *all the kingdoms of the world*. How happened it that he did not diſcover America? or is it only with *kingdoms* that his ſooty highneſs has any intereſt?

I have too much reſpect for the moral character of Chriſt, to believe that he told this whale of a miracle himſelf; neither is it eaſy to account for what purpoſe it could have been fabricated, unleſs it were to impoſe upon the connoiſſeurs of miracles, as is ſometimes practiſed upon the connoiſſeurs of Queen Anne's farthings, and collectors of relics and antiquities; or to render the belief of miracles ridiculous, by out-doing miracle, as Don Quixotte out-did chivalry; or to embarraſs the belief of miracles by making it doubtful by what power, whether of God, or of the devil, any thing called a miracle was performed. It requires, however, a great deal of faith in the devil to believe this miracle.

In every point of view, in which thoſe things called miracles can be placed and conſidered, the reality of them is improbable, and their exiſtence unneceſſary. They would not, as before obſerved, anſwer any uſeful purpoſe, even if they were true; for it is more difficult to obtain belief to a miracle, than to a principle evidently moral, without any miracle. Moral principle ſpeaks univerſally for itſelf. Miracle could be but a thing of the moment, and ſeen but by a few; after this, it requires a transfer of faith, from God

to man, to believe a miracle upon man's report. Inſtead therefore of admitting the recitals of miracles, as evidence of any ſyſtem of religion being true, they ought to be conſidered as ſymptoms of its being fabulous. It is neceſſary to the full and upright character of truth, that it rejects the crutch; and it is conſiſtent with the character of fable, to ſeek the aid that truth rejects. Thus much for myſtery and miracle.

As myſtery and miracle took charge of the paſt and preſent, propheſy took charge of the future, and rounded the tenſes of faith. It was not ſufficient to know what had been done, but what would be done. The ſuppoſed prophet was the ſuppoſed hiſtorian of times to come: and if he happened, in ſhooting with a long bow of a thouſand years, to ſtrike within a thouſand miles of a mark, the ingenuity of poſterity could make it point plank: and if he happened to be directly wrong, it was only to ſuppoſe, as in the caſe of Jonah and Nineveh, that God had repented himſelf, and changed his mind. What a fool do fabulous ſyſtems of religion make of man!

It has been ſhewn in a former part of this work, that the original meaning of the words *prophet* and *propheſying* has been changed, and that a prophet, in the ſenſe the word is now uſed, is a creature of modern invention; and it is owing to this change in the meaning of the words, that the flights and metaphors of the Jewiſh poets, and phraſes and expreſſions now rendered obſcure by our not being acquainted with the local circumſtances to which they applied at the time they were uſed, have been erected into propheſies, and made to bend to explanations at the will and whimſical conceits of ſectaries, expounders, and commentators. Every thing unintelligible was prophetical, and every thing inſignificant was typical. A blunder would have ſerved for a prophecy; and a diſhclout for a type.

If by a prophet we are to ſuppoſe a man, to whom the Almighty communicated ſome event that would take place in future, either there were ſuch men, or there were not. If there were, it is conſiſtent to believe that the event, ſo communicated, would be told in terms that could be underſtood; and not related in ſuch a looſe and obſcure manner as to be out of the comprehenſion of thoſe that heard it, and ſo equivocal as to fit almoſt any circumſtance that might happen afterwards. It is conceiving very irreverently of the Almighty, to ſuppoſe he would deal in this jeſting manner with mankind: yet all the things called propheſies, in the book called the Bible, come under this deſcription.

But it is with propheſy as it is with miracle. It could not anſwer the purpoſe even if it were real. Thoſe to whom a propheſy ſhould be told, could not tell whether the man propheſied or lied, or whether it had been revealed to him, or whether he conceited it: and if the thing that he propheſied, or pretended to propheſy, ſhould happen, or ſomething like it, among the multitude of things that are daily happening, nobody could again know whether he foreknew it, or gueſſed at it, or whether it was accidental. A prophet, therefore, is a character uſeleſs and unneceſſary; and the ſafe ſide of the caſe is, to guard againſt being impoſed upon, by not giving credit to ſuch relations.

Upon the whole, myſtery, miracle, and propheſy, are appendages that belong to fabulous and not to true religion. They are the means by which ſo many *Lo heres!* and *Lo theres!* have been ſpread about the world, and religion been made into a trade. The ſucceſs of one impoſtor gave encouragement to another, and the quieting ſalvo of doing *ſome good* by keeping up a *pious fraud*, protected them from remorſe.

Having now extended the ſubject to a greater length than I firſt intended, I ſhall bring it to a cloſe, by abſtracting a ſummary from the whole.

Firſt, That the idea or belief of a word of God exiſting in print, or in writing, or in ſpeech, is inconſiſtent in itſelf for the reaſons already aſſigned. Theſe reaſons, among many others, are the want of an univerſal language; the mutability of language; the errors to which tranſlations are ſubject; the poſſibility of totally ſuppreſſing ſuch a word; the probability of altering it, or of fabricating the whole, and impoſing it upon the world.

Secondly, That the creation we behold is the real and ever exiſting word of God, in which we cannot be deceived. It proclaimeth his power, it demonſtrates his wiſdom, it manifeſts his goodneſs and beneficence.

Thirdly, That the moral duty of man conſiſts in imitating the moral goodneſs and beneficence of God manifeſted in the creation towards all his creatures. That ſeeing, as we daily do, the goodneſs of God to all men, it is an example calling upon all men to practiſe the ſame towards each other; and conſequently that every thing of perſecution and revenge, between man and man, and every thing of cruelty to animals, is a violation of moral duty.

I trouble not myſelf about the manner of future exiſtence. I content myſelf with believing, even to poſitive conviction, that the

power that gave me exiſtence is able to continue it, in any form and manner he pleaſes, either with or without this body; and it appears more probable to me that I ſhall continue to exiſt hereafter, than that I ſhould have had exiſtence, as I now have, before that exiſtence began.

It is certain that, in one point, all nations of the earth, and all religions agree. All believe in a God. The things in which they diſagree, are the redundancies annexed to that belief; and therefore, if ever an univerſal religion ſhould prevail, it will not be believing any thing new, but in getting rid of redundancies, and believing as man believed at firſt. Adam, if ever there were ſuch a man, was created a Deiſt; but in the mean time let every man follow, as he has a right to do, the religion and the worſhip he prefers.

ne ends the first part of Paines "age of Reason", and it deserves
ut one fate. viz, it ought to be cast into the nocturnal region
everlasting forgetfulness; and if it was proper for a chr
tian to wish revenge upon the author, his lightest pun
shment ought to be, a pounding with "a mallet a
heavy as the isle of St Domingo". This part of his
ge of Reason is direful; it is distressing and heart rev
ding to read it. Just so, exceedingly Paine-ful.

Scribblers would do well to avo
dding nonsense of their own to the
blasphemy & the absurdities of the
book.

THE

AGE OF REASON.

PART THE SECOND.

BEING AN

INVESTIGATION

OF

TRUE AND OF FABULOUS

THEOLOGY.

By THOMAS PAINE,

AUTHOR OF THE WORKS ENTITLED, COMMON SENSE,—RIGHTS OF MAN, PARTS FIRST AND SECOND,—THE FIRST PART OF THE AGE OF REASON,—AND DISSERTATIONS ON FIRST PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT.

PREFACE.

I HAVE mentioned in the former part of the *Age of Reaſon*, that it had long been my intention to publiſh my thoughts upon religion, but that I had originally reſerved it to a later period in life, intending it to be the laſt work I ſhould undertake. The circumſtances, however, that exiſted in France in the latter end of the year 1793, determined me to delay it no longer. The juſt and humane principles of the revolution, which philoſophy had firſt diffuſed, had been departed from. The idea, always dangerous to ſociety as it is derogatory to the Almighty, that prieſts could forgive ſins, though it ſeemed to exiſt no longer, had blunted the feelings of humanity, and callouſly prepared men for the commiſſion of all crimes. The intolerant ſpirit of church perſecution had transferred itſelf into politics; the tribunals, ſtiled revolutionary, ſupplied the place of an inquiſition, and the guillotine of the ſtake. I ſaw many of my moſt intimate friends deſtroyed; others daily carried to priſon; and I had reaſon to believe, and had alſo intimations given me, that the ſame danger was approaching myſelf.

Under theſe diſadvantages I began the former part of the *Age of Reaſon;* I had, beſides, neither bible nor teſtament to refer to, though I was writing againſt both; nor could I procure any; notwithſtanding which, I have produced a work that no bible believer, though writing at his eaſe, and with a library of church books about him, can refute. Towards the latter end of December of that year, a motion was made and carried to exclude foreigners from the convention. There were but two, Anacharſis Cloots and myſelf; and I ſaw I was particularly pointed at by Bourdon de l'Oiſe, in his ſpeech on that motion. Conceiving, after this, that I had but a few days of liberty, I ſat down and brought the work to a cloſe as ſpeedily as poſſible; and I had not finiſhed it more than ſix hours, in the ſtate it has ſince appeared, before a guard came, about three in the morning, with an order ſigned by the two committees of public ſafety and ſurety general, for putting me in arreſtation as a foreigner, and conveying me to the priſon of the Luxem-

bourg. I contrived, in my way there, to call on Joel Barlow; and I put the manuſcript of the work into his hands, as more ſafe than in my poſſeſſion in priſon: and not knowing what might be the fate in France, either of the writer or the work, I addreſſed it to the protection of the citizens of the United States.

It is juſtice that I ſay, that the guard who executed this order, and the interpreter to the committee of general ſurety, who accompanied them to examine my papers, treated me not only with civility, but with reſpect. The keeper of the Luxembourg, Benoit, a man of a good heart, ſhewed to me every friendſhip in his power, as did alſo all his family, while he continued in that ſtation. He was removed from it, put into arreſtation, and carried before the tribunal upon a malignant accuſation, but acquitted.

After I had been in the Luxembourg about three weeks, the Americans, then in Paris, went in a body to the convention, to reclaim me as their countryman and friend; but were anſwered by the preſident, Vadier, who was alſo preſident of the committee of ſurety general, and had ſigned the order for my arreſtation, that I was born in England. I heard no more after this from any perſon out of the walls of the priſon, till the fall of Robeſpierre on the 9th of Thermidor, 27th July, 1794.

About two months before this event, I was ſeized with a fever that in its progreſs had every ſymptom of becoming mortal, and from the effects of which I am not recovered. It was then that I remembered with renewed ſatisfaction, and congratulated myſelf moſt ſincerely, on having written the former part of the *Age of Reaſon*. I had then but little expectation of ſurviving, and thoſe about me had leſs. I know, therefore, by experience, the conſcientious trial of my own principles.

I was then with three chamber comrades, Joſeph Vanhuele of Bruges, Charles Baſtini and Michael Robyns of Louvain. The unceaſing and anxious attention of theſe three friends to me by night and by day, I remember with gratitude, and mention with pleaſure. It happened that a phyſician (Dr. Graham) and a ſurgeon (Mr. Bond), part of the ſuite of General O'Hara, were then in the Luxembourg. I aſk not myſelf, whether it will be convenient to them, as men under the Engliſh government, that I expreſs to them my thanks, but I ſhould reproach myſelf if I did not, and alſo to the phyſician of the Luxembourg, Dr. Markoſki.

I have ſome reaſon to believe, becauſe I cannot diſcover any other, that this illneſs preſerved me in exiſtence. Among the papers of

Paine d[illegible] notwith[illegible]ding this boasting congratu[illegible] of himse[illegible] great ag[illegible] and dis[illegible] mind. [illegible]ciples" w[illegible] able to [illegible] another at the [illegible] his death deserted and he cried on "his paroxisms of distress", "O Lord help me, God help me, Jesu Christ help me". But this cry was in vain, "for his hand was past, and summer ended"

Robeſpierre that were examined and reported upon to the convention by a committee of deputies, is a note in the hand-writing of Robeſpierre, in the following words:

"Demander que Thomas Paine ſoit "decréte d'accuſation pour l'interêt "l'Amerique autant que de la "France."	"Demand that Thomas Paine "be decreed of accuſation, "for the intereſt of America "as well as of France."

From what cauſe it was that the intention was not put in execution, I know not, and cannot inform myſelf; and therefore I aſcribe it to impoſſibility, on account of that illneſs.

The convention, to repair as much as lay in their power the injuſtice I had ſuſtained, invited me publicly and unanimouſly to return into the convention, and which I accepted, to ſhew I could bear an injury without permitting it to injure my principles or my diſpoſition. It is not becauſe right principles have been violated that they are to be abandoned.

I have ſeen, ſince I have been at liberty, ſeveral publications written, ſome in America and ſome in England, as anſwers to the former part of the *Age of Reaſon*. If the authors of theſe can amuſe themſelves by ſo doing, I ſhall not interrupt them. They may write againſt the work and againſt me as much as they pleaſe. They do me more ſervice than they intend, and I can have no objection that they write on. They will find, however, by this ſecond part, without its being written as an anſwer to them, that they muſt return to their work, and ſpin their cobweb over again. The firſt is bruſhed away by accident.

They will now find that I have furniſhed myſelf with a Bible and Teſtament; and I can ſay alſo that I have found them to be much worſe books than I conceived. If I have erred in any thing, in the former part of the *Age of Reaſon*, it has been by ſpeaking better of ſome parts than they deſerved.

I obſerve that all my opponents reſort, more or leſs, to what they call ſcripture evidence and bible authority, to help them out. They are ſo little maſters of the ſubject, as to confound a diſpute about authenticity, with a diſpute about doctrines. I will, however, put them right, that if they ſhould be diſpoſed to write any more, they may know how to begin.

THOMAS PAINE.

October, 1795.

This second part of the "Age of Reason" was written by Paine after he had become a drunkard, and had written a most slanderous and abusive letter to General Washington. His letter is contained in this book, immediately, succeeding this second part of his Age of Reason. The following quotation from it will show how entirely destitute of principle, and feeling he was when he wrote his letter, and consequently must have been also when he finished the "Age of Reason".‡ "As to you, Sir, treacherous in private friendship, and a hypocrite in public life, the world will be puzzled to decide, whether you are an impostor or an apostate, whether you have abandoned good principles, or whether you ever had any." The occasion of this was, because Washington made no exertions to have him freed from his imprisonment by the party of Robespierre in France. [See this Preface, on the preceding pages.]

For more of this vile abuse see pages 5. 7. 10. 11. 14. 15 of this letter to Washington. It is not difficult to conceive how a man could find the Bible full of "murders falsehoods" &c, when he could traduce in the most open and shameless manner, the character of a most worthy and amiable man. Paine found not his vices countenanced in it.

THE

AGE OF REASON.

PART II.

IT has often been ſaid, that any thing may be proved from the bible; but before any thing can be admitted as proved from the bible, the bible itſelf muſt be proved to be true; for if the bible be not true, or the truth of it be doubtful, it ceaſes to have authority, and cannot be admitted as proof of any thing.

It has been the practice of all Chriſtian commentators on the bible, and of all Chriſtian prieſts and preachers, to impoſe the bible on the world as a maſs of truth, and as the word of God. They have diſputed and wrangled, and have anathematiſed each other about the ſuppoſeable meaning of particular parts and paſſages therein: one has ſaid and inſiſted that ſuch a paſſage meant ſuch a thing; another that it meant directly the contrary; and a third that it meant neither one nor the other, but ſomething different from both; and this they have called *underſtanding* the Bible.

It has happened that all the anſwers that I have ſeen to the former part of *The Age of Reaſon*, have been written by prieſts; and theſe pious men, like their predeceſſors, contend and wrangle, and *underſtand* the bible. Each underſtands it differently, but each underſtands it beſt, and they have agreed in nothing, but in telling their readers that Thomas Paine underſtands it not.

Now, inſtead of waſting their time and heating themſelves in fractious diſputations about doctrinal points drawn from the bible, theſe men *ought to know*, and if they do not, it is civility to inform them, that the firſt thing to be *underſtood* is, whether there is ſufficient authority for believing the bible to be the word of God, or whether there is not?

There are matters in that book, said to be done by the *express command of God*, that are as shocking to humanity, and to every idea we have of moral justice, as any thing done by Robespierre, by Carrier, by Joseph Lebon, in France; by the English government in the East-Indies; or by any other assassin in modern times. When we read in the books ascribed to Moses, Joshua, &c. that they (the Israelites) came by stealth upon whole nations of people, who, as the history itself shews, had given them no offence, that they put *all those nations to the sword—that they spared neither age nor infancy—that they utterly destroyed men, women, and children—that they left not a soul to breathe*,—expressions that are repeated over and over again in those books, and that too with exulting ferocity, are we sure these things are facts? Are we sure that the Creator of man commissioned these things to be done? Are we sure that the books that tell us so were written by his authority?

It is not the antiquity of a tale that is any evidence of its truth, on the contrary, it is a symptom of its being fabulous; for the more ancient any history pretends to be, the more it has the resemblance of fable. The origin of every nation is buried in fabulous tradition, and that of the Jews is as much to be suspected as any other.

To charge the commission of things upon the Almighty, which in their own nature, and by every rule of moral justice, are crimes, as all assassination is, and more especially the assassination of infants, is a matter of serious concern. The bible tells us, that those assassinations were done by the *express command of God*. To believe, therefore, the bible to be true, we must *unbelieve* all our belief in the moral justice of God; for wherein could crying or smiling infants offend? And to read the bible without horror, we must undo every thing that is tender, sympathising, and benevolent in the heart of man. Speaking for myself, if I had no other evidence that the bible is fabulous, than the sacrifice I must make to believe it to be true, that alone would be sufficient to determine my choice.

But in addition to all the moral evidence against the bible, I will, in the progress of this work, produce such other evidence as even a priest cannot deny, and shew from that evidence, that the bible is not entitled to credit as being the word of God.

But before I proceed to this examination, I will shew wherein the bible differs from all other ancient writings with respect to the nature of the evidence necessary to establish its authenticity; and this is the more proper to be done, because the advocates of the bible in their answers to the former part of *The Age of Reason*,

undertake to say, and they put some stress thereon, that the authenticity of the bible is as well established as that of any other ancient book: as if our belief of the one could become any rule for our belief of the other.

I know, however, but of one ancient book that authoritatively challenges universal consent and belief, and that is *Euclid's Elements of Geometry*;* and the reason is, because it is a book of self-evident demonstration, entirely independent of its author, and of every thing relating to time, place, and circumstance. The matters contained in that book would have the same authority they now have, had they been written by any other person, or had the work been anonymous, or had the author never been known; for the identical certainty of who was the author, makes no part of our belief of the matters contained in the book.

But it is quite otherwise with respect to the books ascribed to Moses, to Joshua, to Samuel, &c. Those are books of *testimony*, and they testify of things naturally incredible; and therefore the whole of our belief, as to the authenticity of those books, rests, in the first place, upon the *certainty* that they were written by Moses, Joshua, and Samuel; secondly, upon the credit we give to their testimony. We may believe the first, that is, we may believe the certainty of the authorship, and yet not the testimony; in the same manner, that we may believe that a certain person gave evidence upon a case, and yet not believe the evidence that he gave. But if it should be found that the books ascribed to Moses, Joshua, and Samuel, were not written by Moses, Joshua, and Samuel, every part of the authority and authenticity of those books is gone at once, for there can be no such thing as forged or invented testimony, neither can there be anonymous testimony, more especially as to things naturally incredible, such as that of talking with God face to face, or that of the sun and moon standing still at the command of a man.

The greatest part of the other ancient books are works of genius; of which kind are those ascribed to Homer, to Plato, to Aristotle, to Demosthenes, to Cicero, &c. Here again the author is not an essential in the credit we give to any of those works; for as works of genius they would have the same merit they have now, were

* *Euclid, according to chronological history, lived three hundred years before Christ, and about one hundred before Archimedes. He was of the city of Alexandria, in Egypt.*

they anonymous. Nobody believes the Trojan ſtory, as related by Homer, to be true; for it is the poet only that is admired, and the merit of the poet will remain, though the ſtory be fabulous. But if we diſbelieve the matters related by the bible authors, Moſes for inſtance, as we diſbelieve the things related by Homer, there remains nothing of Moſes, in our eſtimation, but an impoſtor. As to the ancient hiſtorians, from Herodotus to Tacitus, we credit them as far as they relate things probable and credible, and no further; for if we do, we muſt believe the two miracles which Tacitus relates were performed by Veſpaſian, that of curing a lame man, and a blind man, in juſt the ſame manner as the ſame things are told of Jeſus Chriſt by his hiſtorians. We muſt alſo believe the miracle cited by Joſephus, that of the ſea of Pamphilia opening to let Alexander and his army paſs, as is related of the Red Sea in Exodus. Theſe miracles are quite as well authenticated as the bible miracles, and yet we do not believe them. Conſequently the degree of evidence neceſſary to eſtabliſh our belief of things naturally incredible, whether in the bible or elſewhere, is far greater than that which obtains our belief to natural and probable things; and therefore the advocates for the bible have no claim to our belief of the bible, becauſe that we believe things ſtated in other ancient writings; ſince we believe the things ſtated in thoſe writings, no further than they are probable and credible, or becauſe they are ſelf-evident, like Euclid, or admire them becauſe they are elegant, like Homer, or approve them becauſe they are ſedate, like Plato, or judicious, like Ariſtotle.

Having premiſed thoſe things, I proceed to examine the authenticity of the bible, and I begin with what are called the five books of Moſes; *Geneſis*, *Exodus*, *Leviticus*, *Numbers*, and *Deuteronomy*. My intention is to ſhew, that thoſe books are ſpurious, and that Moſes is not the author of them; and ſtill further, that they were not written in the time of Moſes, nor till ſeveral hundred years afterwards; that they are no other than an attempted hiſtory of the life of Moſes, and of the times in which he is ſaid to have lived; and alſo of the times prior thereto, written by ſome very ignorant and ſtupid pretenders to authorſhip, ſeveral hundred years after the death of Moſes; as men now write hiſtories of things that happened, or are ſuppoſed to have happened, ſeveral hundred, or ſeveral thouſand years ago.

The evidence that I ſhall produce in this caſe, is from the books themſelves; and I will confine myſelf to this evidence only. Were

I to refer for proofs to any of the ancient authors, whom the advocates of the bible call prophane authors, they would controvert that authority as I controvert theirs. I will therefore come on their own ground, and oppose them with their own weapon, the bible.

In the first place, there is no affirmative evidence that Moses is the author of those books; and that he is the author, is altogether an unfounded opinion got abroad nobody knows how. The style and manner in which those books are written, give no room to believe, or even to suppose, they were written by Moses; for it is altogether the style and manner of another person speaking of Moses. In Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers (for every thing in Genesis is prior to the time of Moses, and not the least allusion is made to him therein) the whole, I say, of these books is in the third person; it is always, *the Lord said unto Moses, or Moses said unto the Lord; or Moses said unto the people, or the people said unto Moses;* and this is the style and manner that historians use in speaking of the persons whose lives and actions they are writing. It may be said that a man may speak of himself in the third person, and therefore it may be supposed that Moses did; but supposition proves nothing; and if the advocates for the belief that Moses wrote those books himself, have nothing better to advance than supposition, they may as well be silent.

But granting the grammatical right that Moses might speak of himself in the third person, because any man might speak of himself in that manner, it cannot be admitted as a fact in those books, that it is Moses who speaks, without rendering Moses truly ridiculous and absurd—For example, Numb. chap. xii. v. 3. "*Now the man Moses was* VERY MEEK *above all the men which were on the face of the earth.*" If Moses said this of himself, instead of being the meekest of men, he was one of the most vain and arrogant of coxcombs; and the advocates for those books may now take which side they please, for both sides are against them. If Moses was not the author, the books are without authority; and if he was the author, the author is without credit; because to boast of *meekness*, is the reverse of meekness, and is a *lie in sentiment*.

In Deuteronomy the style and manner of writing marks more evidently than in the former books that Moses is not the writer. The manner here used is dramatical. The writer opens the subject by a short introductory discourse, and then introduces Moses as in the act of speaking, and when he has made Moses finish his harangue, he (the writer) resumes his own part and speaks till he brings

Moſes forward again, and at laſt cloſes the ſcene with an account of the death, funeral, and character of Moſes.

This interchange of ſpeakers occurs four times in this book. From the firſt verſe of the firſt chapter to the end of the fifth verſe it is the writer who ſpeaks, he then introduces Moſes as in the act of making his harangue, and this continues to the end of the 40th verſe of the fourth chapter. Here the writer drops Moſes and ſpeaks hiſtorically of what was done in conſequence of what Moſes, when living, is ſuppoſed to have ſaid, and which the writer had dramatically rehearſed.

The writer opens the ſubject again in the firſt verſe of the fifth chapter, though it is only by ſaying that Moſes called the people of Iſrael together; he then introduces Moſes as before, and continues him as in the act of ſpeaking to the end of the 26th chapter. He does the ſame thing at the beginning of the 27th chapter, and continues Moſes, as in the act of ſpeaking, to the end of the 28th chapter. At the 29th chapter the writer ſpeaks again through the whole of the firſt verſe, and the firſt line of the ſecond verſe, where he introduces Moſes for the laſt time, and continues him as in the act of ſpeaking to the end of the 33d chapter.

The writer having now finiſhed the rehearſal on the part of Moſes, comes forward and ſpeaks through the whole of the laſt chapter. He begins by telling the reader that Moſes went up to the top of Piſgah, that he ſaw from thence the land which (the writer ſays) had been promiſed to Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob—that he, Moſes, died there in the land of Moab—that he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, but that no man knoweth of his ſepulchre unto this day; that is, unto the time in which the writer lived who wrote the book of Deuteronomy. The writer then tells, that Moſes was one hundred and ten years of age when he died—that his eye was not dim nor his natural force abated; and he concludes by ſaying, that there aroſe not a prophet *ſince* in Iſrael like unto Moſes, whom, ſays this anonymous writer, the Lord knew face to face.

Having thus ſhewn, as far as grammatical evidence applies, that Moſes was not the writer of thoſe books, I will, after making a few obſervations on the inconſiſtencies of the writer of the book of Deuteronomy, proceed to ſhew, from the hiſtorical and chronological evidence contained in thoſe books, that Moſes *was not*, becauſe *he could not be*, the writer of them; and conſequently, that

there is no authority for believing, that the inhuman and horrid butcheries of men, women and children, told of in those books, were done, as those books say they were, at the command of God. It is a duty incumbent on every true deist, that he vindicates the moral justice of God against the calumnies of the bible.

The writer of the book of Deuteronomy, whoever he was, for it is an anonymous work, is obscure, and also contradictory with himself in the account he has given of Moses.

After telling that Moses went to the top of Pisgah (and it does not appear from any account that he ever came down again) he tells us that Moses died *there* in the land of Moab, and that *he* buried him in a valley in the land of Moab: but as there is no antecedent to the pronoun *he*, there is no knowing who the *he* was that did bury him. If the writer meant that *he* (God) buried him, how should *he*, the writer, know it, or why should we (the readers) believe him, since we know not who the writer was that tells us so; for certainly Moses could not himself tell where he was buried.

The writer also tells us, that no man knoweth where the sepulchre of Moses is *unto this day*, meaning the time in which this writer lived, how then should he know that Moses was buried in a valley in the land of Moab? for as the writer lived long after the time of Moses, as is evident from his using the expression *unto this day*, meaning a great length of time after the death of Moses, he certainly was not at his funeral. And on the other hand, it is impossible that Moses himself could say, that *no man knoweth where his sepulchre is unto this day*. To make Moses the speaker would be an improvement on the play of a child that hides itself and cries, *nobody can find me*. Nobody can find Moses.

This writer has no where told us, how he came by the speeches that he has put into the mouth of Moses to speak, and therefore we have a right to conclude, that he either composed them himself or wrote them from oral tradition. One or other of these is the more probable, since he has given, in the fifth chapter, a table of commandments, in which that called the fourth commandment is different from the fourth commandment in the twentieth chapter of Exodus. In that of Exodus, the reason given for keeping the seventh day is, because (says the commandment) God made the heavens and the earth in six days, and rested on the seventh; but in that of Deuteronomy, the reason given is, that it was the day on which the children of Israel came out of Egypt, and *therefore*, says

this commandment, *the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the ſabbath day*. *This* makes no mention of the creation, nor *that* of the coming out of Egypt. There are alſo many things given as laws of Moſes in this book, that are not to be found in any of the other books, among which is that inhuman and brutal law, ch. xxi, v. 18, 19, 20, 21, which authoriſes parents, the father, and the mother, to bring their own children to have them ſtoned to death, for what it is pleaſed to call ſtubbornneſs. But prieſts have always been fond of preaching up Deuteronomy, for Deuteronomy preaches up tithes; and it is from this book, ch. xxv, v. 4, they have taken the phraſe, and applied it to tithing, that *thou ſhalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn*. And that this might not eſcape obſervation, they have noted it in the table of contents, at the head of the chapter, though it is only a ſingle verſe of leſs than two lines. O prieſts! prieſts! ye are willing to be compared to an ox for the ſake of tithes. Though it is impoſſible for us to know *identically* who the writer of Deuteronomy was, it is not difficult to diſcover him *profeſſionally*, that he was ſome Jewiſh prieſt, who lived, as I ſhall ſhew in the courſe of this work, at leaſt three hundred and fifty years after the time of Moſes.

I come now to ſpeak of the hiſtorical and chronological evidence. The chronology that I ſhall uſe is the bible chronology, for I mean not to go out of the bible for evidence of any thing, but to make the bible itſelf prove, hiſtorically, and chronologically, that Moſes is not the author of the books aſcribed to him. It is therefore proper that I inform the reader (ſuch at leaſt as may not have the opportunity of knowing it) that in the larger bibles, and alſo in ſome ſmaller ones, there is a ſeries of chronology printed in the margin of every page, for the purpoſe of ſhewing how long the hiſtorical matters ſtated in each page happened, or are ſuppoſed to have happened, before Chriſt, and conſequently the diſtance of time between one hiſtorical circumſtance and another.

I begin with the book of Geneſis.—In the 14th chapter of Geneſis, the writer gives an account of Lot being taken priſoner, in a battle between the four kings againſt five, and carried off; and that when the account of Lot being taken came to Abraham, that he armed all his houſhold, and marched to reſcue Lot from the captors; and that he purſued them unto *Dan*. (Ver. 14.)

To ſhew in what manner this expreſſion of purſuing *them unto Dan*, applies to the caſe in queſtion, I will refer to two circumſtances, the one in America, the other in France. The city now called

New-York in America, was originally New-Amſterdam; and the town in France lately called Havre-Marat, was before called Havre-de-Grace. New-Amſterdam was changed to New-York in the year 1664, and Havre-de-Grace to Havre-Marat in the year 1793. Should, therefore, any writing be found, though without date, in which the name of *New-York* ſhould be mentioned, it would be certain evidence that ſuch a writing could not have been written before, and muſt have been written after New-Amſterdam was changed to New-York, and conſequently not till after the year 1664, or at leaſt during the courſe of that year. And in like manner any dateleſs writing, with the name of Havre-Marat, would be certain evidence that ſuch a writing muſt have been written after Havre-de-Grace became Havre-Marat, and conſequently not till after the year 1793, or at leaſt during the courſe of that year.

I now come to the application of thoſe caſes, and to ſhew that there was no ſuch place as *Dan* till many years after the death of Moſes, and conſequently that Moſes could not be the writer of the book of Geneſis where this account of purſuing them unto *Dan* is given.

The place that is called Dan in the bible, was originally a town of the Gentiles called Laiſh, and when the tribe of Dan ſeized upon this town, they changed its name to Dan, in commemoration of Dan, who was the father of that tribe, and the great grandſon of Abraham.

To eſtabliſh this in proof, it is neceſſary to refer from Geneſis to the 18th chapter of the book, called the book of Judges. It is there ſaid (verſe 27), that *they* (the Danites) *came unto Laiſh to a people that were quiet and ſecure, and they ſmote them with the edge of the ſword* (the bible is filled with murder) *and burned the city with fire—and they built a city* (verſe 28) *and dwelt therein—and they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, howbeit the name of the city was Laiſh at the firſt.*

This account of the Danites taking poſſeſſion of Laiſh and changing it to Dan, is placed in the book of Judges immediately after the death of Sampſon. The death of Sampſon is ſaid to have happened 1120 years before Chriſt; and that of Moſes 1451 before Chriſt; and therefore, according to the hiſtorical arrangement, the place was not called Dan till 331 years after the death of Moſes.

There is a ſtriking confuſion between the hiſtorical and the chronological arrangement in the book of Judges. The five laſt chapters, as they ſtand in the book, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, are put

chronologically before all the preceding chapters. They are made to be 28 years before the 16th chapter, 266 before the 15th—245 before the 13th—195 before the 9th—90 before the 4th—and 15 years before the firſt chapter. This ſhews the uncertain and fabulous ſtate of the bible. According to the chronological arrangement, the taking of Laiſh and giving it the name of Dan, is made to be twenty years after the death of Joſhua, who was the ſucceſſor of Moſes; and by the hiſtorical order, as it ſtands in the book, it is made to be three hundred and ſix years after the death of Joſhua, and three hundred and thirty-one after that of Moſes. But they both exclude Moſes from being the writer of Geneſis; becauſe, according to either of the ſtatements, no ſuch place as Dan exiſted in the time of Moſes; and therefore the writer of Geneſis muſt have been ſome perſon that lived after the town of Laiſh had the name of Dan, and who that perſon was nobody knows, and, conſequently the book of Geneſis is anonymous and without authority.

I come now to ſtate another point of hiſtorical and chronological evidence, and to ſhew therefrom, as in the preceding caſe, that Moſes is not the author of the book of Geneſis.

In the 36th chapter of Geneſis, there is given a genealogy of the ſons and deſcendants of Eſau, who are called Edomites, and alſo a liſt by name of the kings of Edom; in enumerating of which, it is ſaid, verſe 31, "and theſe are the kings that reigned in "Edom *before there reigned any king over the children of Iſrael.*"

Now, were any dateleſs writing to be found, in which, ſpeaking of any paſt events, the writer ſhould ſay, theſe things happened before there was any congreſs in America, or before there was any convention in France, it would be evidence that ſuch writing could not have been written before, and could only be written after there was a congreſs in America, or a convention in France, as the caſe might be; and conſequently that it could not be written by any perſon who died before there was a congreſs in the one country, or a convention in the other.

Nothing is more frequent, as well in hiſtory as in converſation, than to refer to a fact in the room of a date. It is moſt natural ſo to do; firſt, becauſe a fact fixes itſelf in the memory better than a date; ſecondly, becauſe the fact includes the date, and ſerves to give two ideas at once; and this manner of ſpeaking by circumſtances, implies as poſitively that the fact alluded to *is paſt*, as if it was ſo expreſſed. When a perſon, in ſpeaking upon any matter, ſays,

it was before I was married—or before my ſon was born—or before I went to America—or before I went to France, it is abſolutely underſtood and intended to be underſtood, that he has been married—that he has had a ſon—that he has been in America, or been in France. Language does not admit of uſing this mode of expreſſion in any other ſenſe, and whenever ſuch an expreſſion is found any where, it can only be underſtood in the ſenſe in which only it could have been uſed.

The paſſage, therefore, that I have quoted—"that theſe are the kings that reigned in Edom before there reigned *any* king over the children of Iſrael," could only have been written after the firſt king began to reign over them; and conſequently that the book of Geneſis, ſo far from having been written by Moſes, could not have been written till the time of Saul at leaſt. This is the poſitive ſenſe of the paſſage, but the expreſſion *any* king, implies more kings than one, at leaſt it implies two; and this will carry it to the time of David, and if taken in a general ſenſe, it carries itſelf through all times of the Jewiſh monarchy.

Had we met with this verſe in any part of the bible that *profeſſed* to have been written after kings began to reign in Iſrael, it would have been impoſſible not to have ſeen the application of it. It happens then that this is the caſe. The two books of Chronicles, which give a hiſtory of *all* the kings of Iſrael, are *profeſſedly*, as well as in fact, written after the Jewiſh monarchy began, and this verſe that I have quoted, and all the remaining verſes of the 36th chapter of Geneſis, are, word for word, in the firſt chapter of Chronicles, beginning at the 43d verſe.

It was with conſiſtency that the writer of the Chronicles could ſay, as he has ſaid, 1 Chron. ch. i. ver. 43, *Theſe are the kings that reigned in Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Iſrael;* becauſe he was going to give, and has given, a liſt of the kings that had reigned in Iſrael. But as it is impoſſible that the ſame expreſſion could have been uſed before that period, it is as certain as any thing can be proved from hiſtorical language, that this part of Geneſis is taken from Chronicles, and that Geneſis is not ſo old as Chronicles; and probably not ſo old as the book of Homer, or as Æſop's Fables; admitting Homer to have been, as the tables of chronology ſtate, cotemporary with David or Solomon, and Æſop to have lived about the end of the Jewiſh monarchy.

Take away from Geneſis the belief that Moſes was the author, on which only the ſtrange belief that it is the word of God has

ſtood, and there remains nothing of Geneſis but an anonymous book of ſtories, fables, and traditionary or invented abſurdities, or of downright lies. The ſtory of Eve and the ſerpent, and of Noah and his ark, drops to a level with the Arabian tales, without the merit of being entertaining; and the account of men living to eight and nine hundred years, becomes as fabulous as the immortality of the giants of the mythology.

Beſides, the character of Moſes, as ſtated in the bible, is the moſt horrid that can be imagined. If thoſe accounts be true, he was the wretch that firſt began and carried on wars on the ſcore, or on the pretence of religion; and under that maſk, or that infatuation, committed the moſt unexampled atrocities that are to be found in the hiſtory of any nation, of which I will ſtate only one inſtance.

When the Jewiſh army returned from one of their plundering and murdering excurſions, the account goes on as follows, Numbers, chap. xxxi, ver. 13.

" And Moſes and Eleazer the prieſt, and all the princes of the " congregation, went forth to meet them without the camp.— " And Moſes was *wroth* with the officers of the hoſt, with the " captains over thouſands, and captains over hundreds, which " came from the battle.—And Moſes ſaid unto them, *Have ye ſaved* " *all the women alive?*—Behold theſe cauſed the children of " Iſrael, through the counſel of Balaam, to commit treſpaſs againſt " the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among " the congregation of the Lord.—Now, therefore, *kill every male* " *among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known a man* " *by lying with him.—But all the women-children that hath not* " *known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourſelves.*"

Among the deteſtable villains that in any period of the world have diſgraced the name of man, it is impoſſible to find a greater than Moſes, if this account be true. Here is an order to butcher the boys, to maſſacre the mothers, and debauch the daughters.

Let any mother put herſelf in the ſituation of thoſe mothers:— one child murdered—another deſtined to violation, and herſelf in the hands of an executioner; let any daughter put herſelf in the ſituation of thoſe daughters, deſtined as prey to the murderers of a mother and a brother, and what will be their feelings? It is in vain that we attempt to impoſe upon nature, for nature will have her courſe, and the religion that tortures all her ſocial ties is a falſe religion.

After this deteſtable order, follows an account of the plunder taken, and the manner of dividing it; and here it is that the prophaneneſs of prieſtly hypocriſy increaſes the catalogue of crimes—verſe 37,—"And *the Lord's tribute* of the ſheep were ſix hundred "and threeſcore and fifteen;—and the beeves was thirty and ſix "thouſand, of which *the Lord's tribute* was threeſcore and twelve—"and the aſſes were thirty thouſand, of which *the Lord's tribute* "was threeſcore and one—and the perſons were ſixteen thouſand, "of which *the Lord's tribute* was thirty and two." In ſhort, the matters contained in this chapter, as well as in many other parts of the bible, are too horrid for humanity to read, or for decency to hear; for it appears from the 35th verſe of this chapter, that the number of women-children conſigned to debauchery by the order of Moſes, was thirty-two thouſand.

People in general know not what wickedneſs there is in this pretended word of God. Brought up in habits of ſuperſtition, they take it for granted, that the bible is true, and that it is good. They permit themſelves not to doubt of it; and they carry the ideas they form of the benevolence of the Almighty, to the book which they have been taught to believe was written by his authority. Good heavens, it is quite another thing! It is a book of lies, wickedneſs, and blaſphemy; for what can be greater blaſphemy than to aſcribe the wickedneſs of man to the orders of the Almighty.

But to return to my ſubject, that of ſhewing that Moſes is not the author of the books aſcribed to him, and that the bible is ſpurious. The two inſtances I have already given would be ſufficient, without any additional evidence, to invalidate the authenticity of any book that pretended to be four or five hundred years more ancient than the matters it ſpeaks of, or refers to, as facts; for in the caſe of *purſuing them unto Dan*, and of the *kings that reigned over the children of Iſrael*, not even the ſlimſy pretence of prophecy can be pleaded. The expreſſions are in the preter-tenſe, and it would be downright idiotiſm to ſay, that a man could propheſy in the preter-tenſe.

But there are many other paſſages ſcattered throughout thoſe books, that unite in the ſame point of evidence. It is ſaid in Exodus (another of the books aſcribed to Moſes), chap. xvi, v. 34, "And the children of Iſrael did eat manna *until they came to a land* "*inhabited*; they did eat manna *until they came unto the borders of the* "*land of Canaan.*"

Whether the children of Iſrael eat manna or not, or what manna was, or whether it was any thing more than a kind of fungus, or ſmall muſhroom, or other vegetable ſubſtance, common to that part of the country, makes no part of my argument. All that I mean to ſhew is, that it is not Moſes that could write this account, becauſe the account extends itſelf beyond the life-time of Moſes. Moſes, according to the bible (but it is ſuch a book of lies and contradictions, there is no knowing which part to believe, or whether any) died in the wilderneſs, and never came upon the borders of the land of Canaan, and conſequently it could not be he that ſaid what the children of Iſrael did, or what they eat when they came there. This account of eating manna, which they tell us was written by Moſes, extends itſelf to the time of Joſhua, the ſucceſſor of Moſes, as appears by the account given in the book of Joſhua after the children of Iſrael had paſſed the river Jordan, and came into the borders of the land of Canaan. Joſhua, chap. v, ver. 12. "*And "the manna ceaſed on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn "of the land; neither had the children of Iſrael manna any more, "but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.*"

But a more remarkable inſtance than this occurs in Deuteronomy, which, while it ſhews that Moſes could not be the writer of that book, ſhews alſo the fabulous notions that prevailed at that time about giants. In the third chapter of Deuteronomy, among the conqueſts ſaid to be made by Moſes, is an account of the taking of Og, king of Baſan, verſe 12. "For only Og, king of Baſan, "remained of the race of giants. Behold his bedſtead was a bedſtead "of iron; is it not in *Rabbath* of the children of Ammon? Nine "cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it "after the cubit of a man." A cubit is 1 foot 9 388-1000 inches. The length, therefore, of the bed was 16 feet 4 inches, and the breadth 7 feet 4 inches. Thus much for this giant's bed. Now for the hiſtorical part, which though the evidence is not ſo direct and poſitive as in the former caſes, it is, nevertheleſs, very preſumable and corroborating evidence, and is better than the *beſt* evidence on the contrary ſide.

The writer, by way of proving the exiſtence of this giant, refers to his bed, as to an *ancient relic*, and ſays, is it not in *Rabbath* (or Rabbah) of the children of Ammon? meaning, that it is; for ſuch is frequently the bible method of affirming a thing. But it could not be Moſes that ſaid this, becauſe Moſes could know nothing about Rabbah, nor of what was in it. Rabbah was not a

city belonging to this giant king, nor was it one of the cities that Moſes took. The knowledge, therefore, that this bed was at Rabbah, and of the particulars of its dimenſions, muſt be referred to the time when Rabbah was taken, and this was not till four hundred years after the death of Moſes; for which ſee 2 Sam. ch. xii, ver. 26, "And Joab (David's general) fought againſt "*Rabbah of the children of Ammon*, and took the royal city," &c.

As I am not undertaking to point out all the contradictions in time, place, and circumſtance, that abound in the books aſcribed to Moſes, and which prove to demonſtration, that thoſe books could not be written by Moſes, nor in the time of Moſes, I proceed to the book of Joſhua; and to ſhew that Joſhua is not the author of that book, and that it is anonymous and without authority. The evidence I ſhall produce is contained in the book itſelf. I will not go out of the bible for proof againſt the ſuppoſed authenticity of the bible. Falſe teſtimony is always good againſt itſelf.

Joſhua, according to the firſt chapter of Joſhua, was the immediate ſucceſſor of Moſes. He was moreover a military man, which Moſes was not; and he continued as chief of the people of Iſrael twenty-five years, that is, from the time that Moſes died, which, according to the bible chronology, was 1451 years before Chriſt, until 1426 years before Chriſt, when, according to the ſame chronology, Joſhua died. If therefore we find in this book, ſaid to have been written by Joſhua, references to *facts done* after the death of Joſhua, it is evidence that Joſhua could not be the author; and alſo that the book could not have been written till after the time of the lateſt fact which it records. As to the character of the book, it is horrid. It is a military hiſtory of rapine and murder, as ſavage and brutal, as thoſe recorded of his predeceſſor in villany and hypocriſy, Moſes; and the blaſphemy conſiſts, as in the former books, in aſcribing thoſe deeds to the orders of the Almighty.

In the firſt place, the book of Joſhua, as is the caſe in the preceding books, is written in the third perſon. It is the hiſtorian of Joſhua that ſpeaks; for it would have been abſurd and vain glorious that Joſhua ſhould ſay of himſelf, as is ſaid of him, in the laſt verſe of the 6th chapter, that *his fame was noiſed throughout all the country*. I now come more immediately to the proof.

In the 24th chapter, ver. 31, it is ſaid, "And Iſrael ſerved the "Lord all the days of Joſhua, and *all the days of the elders that* "*over-lived Joſhua*." How in the name of common ſenſe, can it be Joſhua that relates what people had done after he was dead?

This account muſt not only have been written by ſome hiſtorian that lived after Joſhua, but that lived alſo after the Elders that had outlived Joſhua.

There are ſeveral paſſages, of a general meaning with reſpect to time, ſcattered throughout the book of Joſhua, that carries the time in which the book was written to a diſtance from the time of Joſhua, but without marking by excluſion any particular time as in the paſſage above quoted. In that paſſage the time that intervened between the death of Joſhua and the death of the Elders, is excluded deſcriptively and abſolutely, and the evidence ſubſtantiates that the book could not have been written till after the death of the laſt.

But though the paſſages to which I allude, and which I am going to quote, do not deſignate any particular time by excluſion, they imply a time far more diſtant from the days of Joſhua, than is contained between the death of Joſhua and the death of the Elders. Such is the paſſage, chap. x, ver. 14, where, after giving an account that the ſun ſtood ſtill upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, at the command of Joſhua (a tale fit only to amuſe children)* the paſſage ſays—" And there was no day like " that, before it, nor *after it*, that the Lord hearkened to the voice of a man."

The time implied by the expreſſion, *after it*, that is after *that* day, being put in compariſon with all the time that paſſed *before it*, muſt, in order to give any expreſſive ſignification to the paſſage, mean a

* *This tale of the ſun ſtanding ſtill upon mount Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, is one of thoſe fables that detects itſelf. Such a circumſtance could not have happened without being known all over the world. One half would have wondered why the ſun did not riſe, and the other why it did not ſet, and the tradition of it would be univerſal; whereas there is not a nation in the world that knows any thing about it.* * *But why muſt the moon ſtand ſtill? What occaſion could there be for moon light in the day time, and that too while the ſun ſhined? As a poetical figure, the whole is well enough; it is a kin to that in the ſong of Deborah and Barak,* The ſtars in their courſes fought againſt Siſera; *but it is inferior to the figurative declaration of Mahomet to the perſons who came to expoſtulate with him on his goings on;* Wert thou, *ſaid he,* to come to me with the ſun in thy right hand, and the moon in thy left, it ſhould not alter my career. *For Joſhua, to have exceeded Mahomet, he ſhould have put the ſun and moon one in*

There is no records of profane history so ancient a
this event & it cannot be any cause of wonder if

great length of time. For example, it would have been ridiculous to have said so the next day, or the next week, or the next month, or the next year. To give therefore meaning to the passage, comparative with the wonder it relates, and the prior time it alludes to, it must mean centuries of years. Less however than one would be trifling; and less than two would be barely admissible.

A distant but general time is also expressed in the 8th chapter, where, after giving an account of the taking the city of Ai, it is said, ver. 28, "And Joshua burned Ai, and made it an heap for "ever, a desolation *unto this day.*" And again, ver. 29, where speaking of the king of Ai, whom Joshua had hanged, and buried at the entering of the gate, it is said, "And he raised thereon a "great heap of stones, which remaineth *unto this day;*" that is, unto the day or time in which the writer of the book of Joshua lived. And again, in the 10th chapter, where, after speaking of the five kings, whom Joshua had hanged on five trees, and then thrown in a cave, it is said, "And he laid great stones on the cave's mouth, which remain unto this *very* day."

In enumerating the several exploits of Joshua and of the tribes and of the places which they conquered or attempted, it is said, chap. xv, v. 63, "As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusa-"lem, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the "Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah AT JERUSALEM *unto* "*this day.*"—The question upon this passage is, at what time did the Jebusites and the children of Judah dwell together at Jerusalem? As this matter occurs again in the first chapter of Judges, I shall reserve my observations till I come to that part.

Having thus shewn from the book of Joshua itself, without any auxiliary evidence whatever, that Joshua is not the author of that book, and that it is anonymous, and consequently without authority, I proceed as before-mentioned to the book of Judges.

The book of Judges is anonymous on the face of it, and there-

each pocket, and carried them as Guy Faux carried his dark lanthorn, and taken them out to shine as he might happen to want them. The sublime and the ridiculous are often so nearly related, that it is difficult to class them separately. One step above the sublime makes the ridiculous, and one step above the ridiculous makes the sublime again. The account, however, abstracted from the poetical fancy, shews the ignorance of Joshua, for he should have commanded the earth to have stood still.

fore even the pretence is wanting to call it the word of God. It has not so much as a nominal voucher. It is altogether fatherless.

This book begins with the same expression as the book of Joshua. That of Joshua begins, chap. i, ver. 1, *Now after the death of Moses*, &c. And this of Judges begins; *Now after the death of Joshua*, &c. This and the similarity of style between the two books, indicate that they are the work of the same author; but who he was is altogether unknown. The only point that the book proves, is, that the author lived long after the time of Joshua; for though it begins as if it followed immediately after his death, the second chapter is an epitome or abstract of the whole book, which, according to the bible chronology, extends its history through a space of three hundred and six years; that is, from the death of Joshua 1426 years before Christ, to the death of Sampson 1120 years before Christ, and only twenty-five years before Saul went *to seek his father's asses, and was made king*; but there is good reason to believe that it was not written till the time of David at least, and that the book of Joshua was not written before the same time.†

In the first chapter of Judges, the writer, after announcing the death of Joshua, proceeds to tell what happened between the children of Judah and the native inhabitants of the land of Canaan. In this statement, the writer, having abruptly mentioned *Jerusalem*, in the 7th verse, says immediately after, in the 8th verse, by way of explanation, "Now the children of Judah *had* fought against Jerusalem and *taken it*."‡ Consequently this book could not have been written before Jerusalem had been taken. The reader will recollect the quotation I have just before made from the 15th chapter of Joshua, ver. 63, where it is said, that *the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem at this day*, meaning the time when the book of Joshua was written.

The evidence I have already produced to prove that the books I have hitherto treated of were not written by the persons to whom they are ascribed, nor till many years after their death, if such persons ever lived, is already so abundant, that I can afford to admit this passage with less weight than I am entitled to draw from it. For the case is, that so far as the bible can be credited as an history, the city of Jerusalem was not taken till the time of David, and consequently that the book of Joshua and of Judges were not written till after the commencement of the reign of David, which was 370 years after the death of Joshua.

The name of the city that was afterwards called Jerusalem, was

originally Jebus or Jebuſi, and was the capital of the Jebuſites. The account of David's taking this city is given in 2 Samuel, chap. v, ver. 4, &c. alſo in 1 Chron. chap. xiv, v. 4, &c. There is no mention in any part of the bible that it was ever taken before, nor any account that favours ſuch an opinion. It is not ſaid, either in Samuel or in Chronicles, that they *utterly deſtroyed men, women, and children—that they left not a ſoul to breathe*, as is ſaid of their other conqueſts; and the ſilence here obſerved, implies that it was taken by capitulation, and that the Jebuſites, the native inhabitants, continued to live in the place after it was taken. The account therefore given in Joſhua, that *the Jebuſites dwell with the children of Judah at Jeruſalem, at this day*; correſponds to no other time than after the taking the city by David.

Having now ſhewn that every book in the bible, from Geneſis to Judges, is without authenticity, I come to the book of *Ruth*—an idle bundling ſtory, fooliſhly told, nobody knows by whom, about a ſtrolling country girl creeping ſlily to-bed to her couſin Boaz. Pretty ſtuff indeed to be called the word of God! It is, however, one of the beſt books in the bible, for it is free from murder and rapine.

I come next to the two books of Samuel; and to ſhew that thoſe books were not written by Samuel, nor till a great length of time after the death of Samuel, and that they are, like all the former books, anonymous, and without authority.

To be convinced that theſe books have been written much later than the time of Samuel, and conſequently not by him, it is only neceſſary to read the account which the writer gives of Saul going to ſeek his father's aſſes, and of his interview with Samuel, of whom Saul went to enquire about thoſe loſt aſſes, as fooliſh people now-a-days go to a conjurer to enquire after loſt things.

The writer, in relating this ſtory of Saul, Samuel, and the aſſes, does not tell it as a thing that had juſt then happened, but as an *ancient ſtory in the time this writer lived*; for he tells it in the language or terms uſed at the time that *Samuel* lived, which obliges the writer to explain the ſtory in the terms or language uſed in the time the *writer* lived.

Samuel, in the account given of him in the firſt of thoſe books, chap. ix. is called *the Seer*; and it is by this term that Saul enquires after him, ver. 11. "And as they (Saul and his ſervant) went up "the hill to the city, they found young maidens going out to draw "water; and they ſaid unto them, *is the Seer here?*" Saul then went according to the direction of theſe maidens, and met Samuel without knowing him, and ſaid to him, ver. 18, "Tell me, I pray

"thee, where the *Seer's houſe is.*" And Samuel anſwered Saul, and ſaid, *I am the Seer.*

As the writer of the book of Samuel relates theſe queſtions and anſwers in the language or manner of ſpeaking uſed in the time they are ſaid to have been ſpoken; and as that manner of ſpeaking was out of uſe when this author wrote, he found it neceſſary, in order to make the ſtory underſtood, to explain the terms in which theſe queſtions and anſwers are ſpoken. And he does this in the 9th verſe, where he ſays—"*Before-time* in Iſrael, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he ſpake, come let us go to the Seer; for he that is now called a prophet, was *before-time* called a Seer." This proves, as I have before ſaid, that this ſtory of Saul, Samuel, and the aſſes, was an ancient ſtory at the time the book of Samuel was written, and conſequently that Samuel did not write it, and that the book is without authenticity.

But if we go further into thoſe books, the evidence is ſtill more poſitive, that Samuel is not the writer of them; for they relate things that did not happen till ſeveral years after the death of Samuel. Samuel died before Saul; for the 1ſt of Samuel, chap. xxviii, tells, that Saul and the witch of Endor conjured Samuel up after he was dead; yet the hiſtory of matters contained in thoſe books is extended through the remaining part of Saul's life, and to the latter end of the life of David, who ſucceeded Saul. The account of the death and burial of Samuel (a thing which he could not write himſelf) is related in the 25th chapter of the firſt book of Samuel; and the chronology affixed to this chapter, makes this to be 1060 years before Chriſt; yet the hiſtory of this *firſt* book is brought down to 1056 years before Chriſt, that is, to the death of Saul, which was not till four years after the death of Samuel.

The ſecond book of Samuel begins with an account of things that did not happen till four years after Samuel was dead; for it begins with the reign of David, who ſucceeded Saul, and it goes on to the end of David's reign, which was forty-three years after the death of Samuel; and therefore the books are in themſelves poſitive evidence that they were not witten by Samuel.

I have now gone through all the books in the firſt part of the bible to which the names of perſons are affixed as being the authors of thoſe books, and which the church, ſtiling itſelf the Chriſtian church, have impoſed upon the world as the writings of Moſes, Joſhua, and Samuel, and I have detected and proved the falſhood of this impoſition.—And now, ye prieſts of every deſcription, who

have preached and written againſt the former part of the *Age of Reaſon*, what have ye to ſay? Will ye, with all this maſs of evidence againſt you, and ſtaring you in the face, ſtill have the aſſurance to march into your pulpits, and continue to impoſe theſe books on your congregations as the works of *inſpired penmen*, and the word of God? when it is as evident as demonſtration can make truth appear, that the perſons who, ye ſay, are the authors, are *not* the authors, and ye know not who the authors are. What ſhadow of pretence have ye now to produce for continuing the blaſphemous fraud? What have ye ſtill to offer againſt the pure and moral religion of Deiſm, in ſupport of your ſyſtem of falſhood, idolatry, and pretended revelation?

Had the cruel and murdering orders with which the bible is filled, and the numberleſs torturing executions of men, women and children, in conſequence of thoſe orders, been aſcribed to ſome friend whoſe memory you revered, you would have glowed with ſatisfaction at detecting the falſhood of the charge, and gloried in defending his injured fame. It is becauſe ye are ſunk in the cruelty of ſuperſtition, or feel no intereſt in the honour of your Creator, that ye liſten to the horrid tales of the bible, or hear them with callous indifference. The evidence I have produced, and ſhall ſtill produce, in the courſe of this work, to prove that the bible is without authority, will, whilſt it wounds the ſtubbornneſs of a prieſt, relieve and tranquilize the mind of millions. It will free them from all thoſe hard thoughts of the Almighty, which prieſtcraft and the bible had infuſed into their minds, and which ſtood in everlaſting oppoſition to all their ideas of his moral juſtice and benevolence.

I come now to the two books of Kings, and the two books of Chronicles. Thoſe books are altogether hiſtorical, and are chiefly confined to the lives and actions of the Jewiſh kings, who in general were a parcel of raſcals: but theſe are matters with which we have no more concern than we have with the Roman emperors, or Homer's account of the Trojan war. Beſides which, as thoſe books are anonymous, and as we know nothing of the writer, or of his character, it is impoſſible for us to know what degree of credit to give to the matters related therein. Like all other ancient hiſtories, they appear to be a jumble of fable and of fact, and of probable and of improbable things, but which diſtance of time and place, and change of circumſtances in the world, have rendered obſolete, and unintereſting.

The chief uſe I ſhall make of thoſe books will be that of comparing them with each other, and with other parts of the bible, to ſhew the confuſion, contradiction, and cruelty, in this pretended word of God.

The firſt book of Kings begins with the reign of Solomon, which, according to the bible chronology, was 1015 years before Chriſt; and the ſecond book ends 588 years before Chriſt, being a little after the reign of Zedekiah, whom Nebuchadnezzar, after taking Jeruſalem, and conquering the Jews, carried captive to Babylon. The two books include a ſpace of four hundred and twenty-ſeven years.

The two books of Chronicles are an hiſtory of the ſame times, and in general of the ſame perſons by another author; for it would be abſurd to ſuppoſe that the ſame author wrote the hiſtory twice over. The firſt book of Chronicles (after giving the genealogy from Adam to Saul which takes up the firſt nine chapters) begins with the reign of David, and the laſt book ends as in the laſt book of Kings, ſoon after the reign of Zedekiah, about 588 years before Chriſt. The two laſt verſes of the laſt chapter bring the hiſtory fifty-two years more forward, that is, to 536. But theſe verſes do not belong to the book, as I ſhall ſhew when I come to ſpeak of the book of Ezra.

The two books of Kings, beſides the hiſtory of Saul, David, and Solomon, who reigned over *all* Iſrael, contain an abſtract of the lives of ſeventeen kings and one queen, who are ſtiled kings of Judah, and of nineteen who are ſtiled kings of Iſrael; for the Jewiſh nation, immediately on the death of Solomon, ſplit into two parties, who choſe ſeparate kings, and who carried on moſt rancorous wars againſt each other.

Theſe two books are little more than a hiſtory of aſſaſſinations, treachery, and wars. The cruelties that the Jews had accuſtomed themſelves to practiſe on the Canaanites, whoſe country they had ſavagely invaded under a pretended gift from God, they afterwards practiſed as furiouſly on each other. Scarcely half their kings died a natural death, and in ſome inſtances whole families were deſtroyed to ſecure poſſeſſion to the ſucceſſor, who, after a few years, and ſometimes only a few months, or leſs, ſhared the ſame fate. In the tenth chapter of the ſecond book of Kings, an account is given of two baſkets full of children's heads, ſeventy in number, being expoſed at the entrance of the city; they were the children of Ahab, and were murdered by the orders of Jehu, whom Eliſha,

the pretended man of God, had anointed to be king over Iſrael, on purpoſe to commit this bloody deed, and aſſaſſinate his predeceſſor. And in the account of the reign of Manahem, one of the kings of Iſrael, who had murdered Shallum, who had reigned but one month, it is ſaid, 2 Kings, chap. xv, ver. 16, that Manahem ſmote the city of Tiphſah, becauſe they opened not the city to him, *and all the women therein that were with child, he ript up.*

Could we permit ourſelves to ſuppoſe that the Almighty would diſtinguiſh any nation of people by he name of *his choſen people*, we muſt ſuppoſe that people to have been an example to all the reſt of the world of the pureſt piety and humanity; and not ſuch a nation of ruffians and cut-throats as the ancient Jews were. A people who, corrupted by, and copying after, ſuch monſters and impoſtors as Moſes and Aaron, Joſhua, Samuel, and David, had diſtinguiſhed themſelves above all others, on the face of the known earth, for barbarity and wickedneſs. If we will not ſtubbornly ſhut our eyes, and ſteel our hearts, it is impoſſible not to ſee, in ſpite of all that long-eſtabliſhed ſuperſtition impoſes upon the mind, that the flattering appellation of *his choſen people*, is no other than a LIE, which the prieſts and leaders of the Jews had invented to cover the baſeneſs of their own characters, and which Chriſtian prieſts, ſometimes as corrupt, and often as cruel, have profeſſed to believe.

The two books of Chronicles are a repetition of the ſame crimes; but the hiſtory is broken in ſeveral places by the author leaving out the reign of ſome of their kings; and in this, as well as in that of Kings, there is ſuch a frequent tranſition from kings of Judah to kings of Iſrael, and from kings of Iſrael to kings of Judah, that the narrative is obſcure in the reading. In the ſame book the hiſtory ſometimes contradicts itſelf. For example, in the ſecond book of Kings, chap. i. ver. 17, we are told, but in rather ambiguous terms, that after the death of Ahaziah, king of Iſrael, Jehoram or Joram (who was of the houſe of Ahab) reigned in his ſtead in the *ſecond year* of Jehoram or Joram, ſon of Jehoſhaphat, king of Judah; and in chap. viii. ver. 16, of the ſame book, it is ſaid, "And in the *fifth year* of Joram, the ſon of Ahab, king of Iſrael, Jehoſhaphat, being then king of Judah, Jehoram the ſon of Jehoſhaphat, king of Judah, began to reign;" that is, one chapter ſays, that Joram of Judah began to reign in the *ſecond* year of Joram of Iſrael; and the other chapter ſays, that Joram of Iſrael began to reign in the *fifth* year of Joram of Judah.

Several of the moſt extraordinary matters related in one hiſtory, as having happened during the reign of ſuch or ſuch of their kings, are not to be found in the other in relating the reign of the ſame king. For example, the two firſt rival kings after the death of Solomon, were Rehoboam and Jeroboam; and in 1 Kings, chap. xii. and xiii. an account is given of Jeroboam making an offering of burnt-incenſe, and that a man, who is there called a man of God, cried out againſt the altar, ch. xiii. ver. 2, "O altar, altar! thus "ſaith the Lord, behold a child ſhall be born unto the houſe of "David, Joſiah by name, and upon thee ſhall he offer the prieſts "of the high places that burn incenſe upon thee, and men's "bones ſhall be burned upon thee."—Verſe 3, "And it came to "paſs, when king Jeroboam heard the ſaying of the man of God, "which had cried againſt the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his "hand from the altar, ſaying, *Lay hold on him;* and his hand "which he put out againſt him, *dried up, ſo that he could not pull "it in again to him.*"

One would think that ſuch an extraordinary caſe as this (which is ſpoken of as a judgment) happening to the chief of one of the parties, and that at the firſt moment of the ſeparation of the Iſraelites into two nations, would, if it had been true, been recorded in both hiſtories. But though men in later times have believed *all that the prophets have ſaid unto them*, it does not appear that thoſe prophets or hiſtorians believed each other. They knew each other too well.

A long account alſo is given in Kings about Elijah. It runs through ſeveral chapters, and concludes with telling, 2 Kings, chap. ii. ver. 11, "And it came to paſs as they (Elijah and Eliſha) "ſtill went on, and talked, that behold there appeared *a chariot of "fire, and horſes of fire*, and parted them both aſunder, and Elijah "*went up by a whirlwind into heaven.*" *Hum!* This the author of Chronicles, miraculous as the ſtory is, makes no mention of, though he mentions Elijah by name. Neither does he ſay any thing of the ſtory related in the ſecond chapter of the ſame book of Kings, of a parcel of children calling Eliſha, *bald-head, bald-head;* and that this *man of God*, ver. 24, "turned back, and looked "upon them, and *curſed them in the name of the Lord;* and there "came forth two ſhe-bears out of the wood, and tore forty and two "children of them." He alſo paſſes over in ſilence the ſtory told, 2 Kings, chap. xiii. that when they were burying a man in the ſepulchre where Eliſha had been buried, it happened that the dead

man, as they were letting him down, (ver. 21.) "touched the bones "of Eliſha, and he (the dead man) *revived, and ſtood upon his "feet.*" The ſtory does not tell us, whether they buried the man, notwithſtanding he revived and ſtood upon his feet, or drew him up again.—Upon all theſe ſtories, the writer of the Chronicles is as ſilent as any writer of the preſent day, who did not chooſe to be accuſed of *lying*, or at leaſt of *romancing*, would be about ſtories of the ſame kind.

But, however theſe two hiſtorians may differ from each other with reſpect to the tales related by either, they are ſilent alike with reſpect to thoſe men ſtiled prophets, whoſe writings fill up the latter part of the bible. Iſaiah, who lived in the time of Hezekiah, is mentioned in Kings, and again in Chronicles, when theſe hiſtories are ſpeaking of that reign; but except in one, or two inſtances at moſt, and thoſe very ſlightly, none of the reſt are ſo much as ſpoken of, or even their exiſtence hinted at, though, according to the bible chronology, they lived within the time thoſe hiſtories were written, and ſome of them long before. If thoſe prophets, as they are called, were men of ſuch importance in their day, as the compilers of the bible, and prieſts and commentators have ſince repreſented them to be, how can it be accounted for, that not one of thoſe hiſtories ſhould ſay any thing about them?

The hiſtory in the books of Kings and of Chronicles is brought forward, as I have already ſaid, to the year 588 before Chriſt. It will therefore be proper to examine which of thoſe prophets lived before that period. Here follows a table of all the prophets, with the times in which they lived before Chriſt, according to the chronology affixed to the firſt chapter of each of the books of the prophets, and alſo of the number of years they lived before the books of Kings and Chronicles were written. ——.

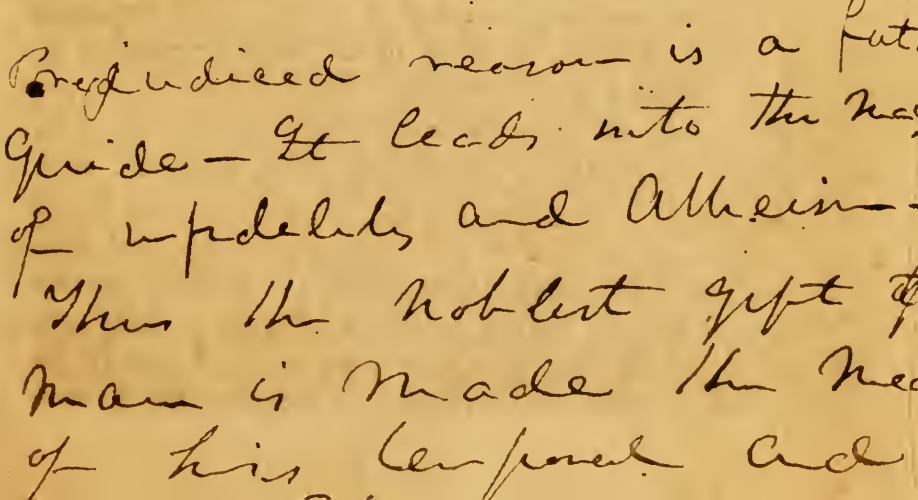

TABLE of the prophets, with the time in which they lived before Chriſt, and alſo before the books of Kings and Chronicles were written.

Names.	Years before Chriſt.	Years before Kings and Chron.	Obſervations.
Iſaiah, - - - -	760	172	mentioned.
Jeremiah, - - -	629	41	mentioned only in the laſt chap. of Chronicles.
Ezekiel, - - -	595	7	not mentioned.
Daniel, - - -	607	19	not mentioned.
Hoſea, - - -	785	97	not mentioned.
Joel, - - - -	800	212	not mentioned.
Amos, - - - -	789	199	not mentioned.
Obadiah, - - -	789	199	not mentioned.
Jonah, - - -	862	274	ſee the note.*
Micah, - - -	750	162	not mentioned.
Nahum, - - -	713	125	not mentioned.
Habbakuk, - -	626	38	not mentioned.
Zephaniah, - -	630	42	not mentioned.
Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi,	after the year 588.		

This table is either not very honourable for the bible hiſtorians, or not very honourable for the bible prophets; and I leave it to prieſts and commentators, who are very learned in little things, to ſettle the point of *etiquette* between the two; and to aſſign a reaſon why the authors of Kings and of Chronicles have treated thoſe prophets, whom, in the former part of the Age of Reaſon, I have conſidered as poets, with as much degrading ſilence as an hiſtorian of the preſent day would treat Peter Pindar.

I have one more obſervation to make on the book of Chronicles, after which I ſhall paſs on to review the remaining books of the bible.

* *In 2 Kings, chap. xiv. ver. 25, the name of Jonah is mentioned on account of the reſtoration of a tract of land by Jeroboam; but nothing further is ſaid of him, nor is any alluſion made to the book of Jonah, nor to his expedition to Nineveh, nor to his encounter with the whale.*

In my observations on the book of Geneſis, I have quoted a paſſage from the 36th chapter, ver. 31, which evidently refers to a time *after* that kings began to reign over the children of Iſrael; and I have ſhewn, that as this verſe is verbatim the ſame as in 1 Chron. chap. i, ver. 43, where it ſtands conſiſtently with the order of hiſtory, which in Geneſis it does not, that the verſe in Geneſis, and a great part of the 36th chapter, have been taken from Chronicles; and that the book of Geneſis, though it is placed firſt in the Bible, and aſcribed to Moſes, has been manufactured by ſome unknown perſon after the book of Chronicles was written, which was not until at leaſt eight hundred and ſixty years after the time of Moſes.

The evidence I proceed by, to ſubſtantiate this, is regular, and has in it but two ſtages. Firſt, as I have already ſtated, that the paſſage in Geneſis refers itſelf for *time* to Chronicles. Secondly, that the book of Chronicles to which this paſſage refers itſelf, was not *began* to be written until at leaſt eight hundred and ſixty years after the time of Moſes. To prove this, we have only to look into the thirteenth verſe of the third chapter of the firſt book of Chronicles, where the writer, in giving the genealogy of the deſcendants of David, mentions *Zedekiah:* and it was in the time of Zedekiah that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jeruſalem 588 years before Chriſt, and conſequently more than 860 years after Moſes. Thoſe who have ſuperſtitiouſly boaſted of the antiquity of the bible, and particularly of the books aſcribed to Moſes, have done it without examination and without any other authority than that of one credulous man telling it to another; for, ſo far as hiſtorical and chronological evidence applies, the very firſt book in the bible is not ſo ancient as the book of Homer, by more than three hundred years, and is about the ſame age with Æſop's Fables.

I am not contending for the morality of Homer; on the contrary, I think it to be a book of falſe glory, tending to inſtil immoral and miſchievous notions of honour; and with reſpect to Æſop, though the moral is in general juſt, the fable is often cruel; and the cruelty of the fable does more injury to the heart, eſpecially in a child, than the moral does good to the judgment.

Having now diſmiſſed Kings and Chronicles, I come to the next in courſe, the book of Ezra.

As one proof, among others I ſhall produce to ſhew the diſorder in which this pretended word of God, the bible, has been put together, and the uncertainty of who the authors were, we have

only to look at the three firſt verſes in Ezra, and the two laſt in Chronicles; for by what kind of cutting and ſhuffling has it been, that the three firſt verſes in Ezra ſhould be the two laſt verſes in Chronicles, or that the two laſt in Chronicles ſhould be the three firſt in Ezra. Either the authors did not know their own works, or the compilers did not know the authors.

Two laſt verſes of Chronicles.

Verſe 22. Now in the firſt year of Cyrus, king of Perſia, that the word of the Lord, ſpoken by the mouth of Jeremiah, might be accompliſhed, the Lord ſtirred up the ſpirit of Cyrus, king of Perſia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it alſo in writing, ſaying,

23. Thus ſaith Cyrus, king of Perſia, all the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an houſe in Jeruſalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up. ☞

Three firſt verſes of Ezra.

Verſe 1. Now in the firſt year of Cyrus, king of Perſia, that the word of the Lord, by the mouth of Jeremiah, might be fulfilled, the Lord ſtirred up the ſpirit of Cyrus, king of Perſia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it alſo in writing, ſaying,

2. Thus ſaith Cyrus, king of Perſia, the Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an houſe at Jeruſalem, which is in Judah.

3. Who is there among you of all his people? His God be with him; and let him go up *to Jeruſalem, which is in Judah, and build the houſe of the Lord God of Iſrael (he is the God) which is in Jeruſalem.*

☞ The laſt verſe in Chronicles is broken abruptly, and ends in the middle of a phraſe, with the word *up*, without ſignifying to what place. This abrupt break, and the appearance of the ſame verſes in different books, ſhew, as I have already ſaid, the diſorder and ignorance in which the bible has been put together, and that the compilers of it had no authority for what they were doing, nor we any authority for believing what they have done.*

* *I obſerved, as I paſſed along, ſeveral broken and ſenſeleſs paſſages in the bible, without thinking them of conſequence enough to be intro-*

The only thing that has any appearance of certainty in the book of Ezra, is the time in which it was written, which was immediately after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, about

duced in the body of the work; such as that, 1 *Samuel, chap. xiii, ver.* 1, *where it is said,* "*Saul reigned* one year; *and when he had* "*reigned* two years *over Israel, Saul chose him three thousand men,*" *&c. The first part of the verse, that Saul reigned* one year, *has no sense, since it does not tell us what Saul did, nor say any thing of what happened, at the end of* that one *year; and it is, besides, mere absurdity to say he reigned* one year, *when the very next phrase says he had reigned two, for if he had reigned two it was impossible not to have reigned one.*

Another instance occurs in Joshua, chap. v. where the writer tells a story of an angel (for such the table of contents at the head of the chapter calls him) appearing unto Joshua, and the story ends abruptly and without any conclusion. The story is as follows—verse 13. "*And* "*it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lift up his eyes* "*and looked, and behold, there stood a man over against him with his* "*sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him and said unto* "*him, art thou for us or for our adversaries? verse* 14. *And he said,* "*nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And* "*Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did* worship, *and said unto* "*him,* What saith my Lord unto his servant? *verse* 15. *And the* "*captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, loose thy shoe from off* "*thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua* "*did so.*"—*And what then? nothing; for here the story ends, and the chapter too.*

Either this story is broken off in the middle, or it is a story told by some Jewish humourist in ridicule of Joshua's pretended mission from God; and the compilers of the bible not perceiving the design of the story, has told it as a serious matter. As a story of humour and ridicule, it has a great deal of point; for it pompously introduces an angel in the figure of a man, with a drawn sword in his hand, before whom Joshua falls on his face to the earth and worships *(which is contrary to their second commandment) and then this most important embassy from heaven ends, in telling Joshua to* pull off his shoe. *It might as well have told him to pull off his breeches.*

It is certain, however, that the Jews did not credit every thing their leaders told them, as appears from the cavalier manner in which they speak of Moses when he was gone into the mount. "*As for* this *Moses, say* "*they,* we wot not what is become of him." *Ex. chap. xxxii. ver.* 1.

536 years before Chriſt. Ezra (who, according to the Jewiſh commentators, is the ſame perſon as is called Eſdras in the Apocrypha) was one of the perſons who returned, and who, it is probable, wrote the account of that affair. Nehemiah, whoſe book follows next to Ezra, was another of the returned perſons, and who it is alſo probable wrote the account of the ſame affair in the book that bears his name. But thoſe accounts are nothing to us, nor to any other perſon, unleſs it be to the Jews, as a part of the hiſtory of their nation; and there is juſt as much of the word of God in thoſe books, as there is in any of the hiſtories of France, or Rapin's Hiſtory of England, or the hiſtory of any other country.

But even in matters of hiſtorical record, neither of thoſe writers are to be depended upon. In the ſecond chapter of Ezra the writer gives a liſt of the tribes and families, and of the preciſe number of ſouls of each, that returned from Babylon to Jeruſalem; and this enrollment of the perſons ſo returned, appears to have been one of the principal objects for writing the book; but in this there is an error that deſtroys the intention of the undertaking.

The writer begins his enrolment in the following manner, chap. ii. ver. 3. "The children of Paroſh two thouſand one "hundred ſeventy and four." Ver. 4. "The children of She- "phatiah three hundred ſeventy and two." And in this manner he proceeds through all the families; and in the 64th verſe, he makes a total, and ſays, "The whole congregation together was "*forty and two thouſand, three hundred and threeſcore.*"

But whoever will take the trouble of caſting up the ſeveral particulars, will find that the total is but 29,818; ſo that the error is 12,542.* What certainty can there be in the bible for anything?

* *Particulars of the families from the ſecond chapter of Ezra.*

Chap. ii.		*Bt. ford.* 11,577		*Bt. ford.* 15,783		*Bt. ford.* 19,444	
Ver. 3	2172	*v.* 13	666	*v.* 23	128	*v.* 33	725
4	372	14	2056	24	42	34	345
5	775	15	454	25	743	35	3630
6	2812	16	98	26	621	36	973
7	1254	17	323	27	122	37	1052
8	945	18	112	28	223	38	1247
9	760	19	223	29	152	39	1017
10	642	20	95	30	156	40	74
11	623	21	123	31	1254	41	128
12	1222	22	56	32	320	42	139
						58	392
	11,577		15,783		19,444	60	652
						Total	29,818

Nehemiah, in like manner, gives a list of the returned families, and of the number of each family. He begins, as in Ezra, by saying, chap. vii, ver. 8, "The children of Parosh two thousand "three hundred and seventy-two;" and so on through all the families. This list differs in several of the particulars from that of Ezra. In the 66th verse, Nehemiah makes a total, and says, as Ezra had said, "The whole congregation together was forty and "two thousand, three hundred and threescore." But the particulars of this list make a total but of 31,089, so that the error here is 11,271. These writers may do well enough for bible-makers; but not for any thing where truth and exactness is necessary.

The next book in course is the book of Esther. If Madam Esther thought it any honour to offer herself as a kept mistress to Ahasuerus, or as a rival to queen Vashti, who had refused to come to a drunken king, in the midst of a drunken company, to be made a shew of (for the account says, they had been drinking seven days and were merry), let Esther and Mordecai look to that. It is no business of ours, at least it is none of mine; besides which, the story has a great deal the appearance of being fabulous, and is also anonymous. I pass on to the book of Job.

The book of Job differs in character from all the books we have hitherto passed over. Treachery and murder make no part of this book. It is the meditations of a mind strongly impressed with the vicissitudes of human life, and by turns sinking under, and struggling against, the pressure. It is a highly wrought composition between willing submission and involuntary discontent; and shews man as he sometimes is, more disposed to be resigned than he is capable of being. Patience has but a small share in the character of the person of whom the book treats; on the contrary, his grief is often impetuous; but he still endeavours to keep a guard upon it, and seems determined, in the midst of accumulating ills, to impose upon himself the hard duty of contentment.

I have spoken in a respectful manner of the book of Job in the former part of the *Age of Reason*, but without knowing at that time what I have learned since, which is, that from all the evidence that can be collected, the book of Job does not belong to the bible.

I have seen the opinion of two Hebrew commentators, Abenhezra and Spinosa, upon this subject. They both say that the book of Job carries no internal evidence of being an Hebrew book; that the genus of the composition, and the drama of the piece, are not

Hebrew; that it has been tranſlated from another language, into Hebrew; and that the author of the book was a Gentile; that the character repreſented under the name of Satan (which is the firſt and only time this name is mentioned in the bible) does not correſpond to any Hebrew idea; and that the two convocations which the Deity is ſuppoſed to have made of thoſe whom the poem calls ſons of God, and the familiarity which this ſuppoſed Satan is ſtated to have with the Deity, are in the ſame caſe.

It may alſo be obſerved, that the book ſhews itſelf to be the production of a mind cultivated in ſcience, which the Jews, ſo far from being famous for, were very ignorant of. The alluſions to objects of natural philoſophy are frequent and ſtrong, and are of a different caſt to any thing in the books known to be Hebrew. The aſtronomical names Pleiades, Orion, and Arcturus, are Greek, and not Hebrew names; and as it does not appear from any thing that is to be found in the bible, that the Jews knew any thing of aſtronomy, or that they ſtudied it, they had no tranſlation for thoſe names into their own language, but adopted the names as they found them in the poem.

That the Jews did tranſlate the literary productions of the Gentile nations into the Hebrew language, and mix them with their own, is not a matter of doubt. The 31ſt chapter of Proverbs is an evidence of this. It is there ſaid, ver. 1. *The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy which his mother taught him.* This verſe ſtands as a preface to the proverbs that follow, and which are not the proverbs of Solomon, but of Lemuel: and this Lemuel was not one of the kings of Iſrael, nor of Judah, but of ſome other country, and conſequently a Gentile. The Jews, however, have adopted his proverbs; and as they cannot give any account who the author of the book of Job was, nor how they came by the book, and as it differs in character from the Hebrew writings, and ſtands totally unconnected with every other book and chapter in the bible before it, and after it, it has all the circumſtantial evidence of being originally a book of the Gentiles.*

* *The prayer known by the name of* Augur's prayer, *in the 30th chapter of Proverbs, immediately preceding the Proverbs of Lemuel, and which is the only ſenſible, and well conceived, and well expreſſed, prayer in the bible, has much the appearance of being a prayer taken from the Gentiles. The name of Augur occurs on no other occaſion than this; and he is introduced, together with the prayer aſcribed to him, in*

The bible-makers, and thoſe regulators of time, the bible-chronologiſts, appear to have been at a loſs where to place, and how to diſpoſe of, the book of Job; for it contains no one hiſtorical circumſtance, nor alluſion to any, that might ſerve to determine its place in the bible. But it would not have anſwered the purpoſe of theſe men to have informed the world of their ignorance; and therefore they have affixed to it the era of 1520 years before Chriſt, which is during the time the Iſraelites were in Egypt; and for which they have juſt as much authority, and no more, than I ſhould have for ſaying it was a thouſand years before that period. The probability, however, is, that it is older than any book in the bible; and it is the only one that can be read without indignation or diſguſt.

We know nothing of what the ancient Gentile world (as it is called) was before the time of the Jews, whoſe practice has been to calumniate and blacken the character of all other nations; and it is from the Jewiſh accounts that we have learned to call them heathen. But as far as we know to the contrary, they were a juſt and a moral people, and not addicted, like the Jews, to cruelty and revenge, but of whoſe profeſſion of faith we are unacquainted. It appears to have been their cuſtom to perſonify both virtue and vice by ſtatues and images, as is done now-a-days both by ſtatuary and by painting; but it does not follow from this, that they worſhipped them any more than we do. I paſs on to the book of

PSALMS, of which it is not neceſſary to make much obſervation. Some of them are moral, and others are very revengeful, and the greater part relates to certain local circumſtances of the Jewiſh

the ſame manner, and nearly in the ſame words, that Lemuël and his proverbs are introduced in the chapter that follows. The firſt verſe of the 30th chapter ſays: "The words of Augur, the ſon of Jakeh even the prophecy." *Here the word prophecy is uſed with the ſame application it has in the following chapter of Lemuel, unconnected with any thing of prediction. The prayer of Augur is in the 8th and 9th verſes:*—"Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither riches nor poverty, but feed me with food convenient for me; leſt I be full and deny thee, and ſay, who is the Lord? or leſt I be poor and ſteal, and take the name of my God in vain? *This has not any of the marks of being a Jewiſh prayer; for the Jews never prayed but when they were in trouble; and never for any thing but victory, vengeance or riches.*

nation at the time they were written, with which we have nothing to do. It is, however, an error or an impoſition to call them the Pſalms of David. They are a collection, as ſong books are now-a-days, from different ſong-writers, who lived at different times. The 137th Pſalm could not have been written till more than four hundred years after the time of David, becauſe it is written in commemoration of an event, the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, which did not happen till that diſtance of time. *By the rivers of Babylon we ſat down; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows, in the midſt thereof; for there they that carried us away captive, required of us a ſong, ſaying, ſing us one of the ſongs of Zion.*" As a man would ſay to an American, or to a Frenchman, or to an Engliſhman, ſing us one of your American ſongs, or your French ſongs, or your Engliſh ſongs. This remark with reſpect to the time this pſalm was written, is of no other uſe than to ſhew (among others already mentioned) the general impoſition the world has been under with reſpect to the authors of the bible. No regard has been paid to time, place, and circumſtance, and the names of perſons have been affixed to the ſeveral books, which it was as impoſſible they ſhould write, as that a man ſhould walk in proceſſion at his own funeral.

The book of Proverbs. Theſe, like the Pſalms, are a collection, and that from authors belonging to other nations than thoſe of the Jewiſh nation, as I have ſhewn in the obſervations upon the book of Job: beſides which, ſome of the proverbs aſcribed to Solomon did not appear till two hundred and fifty years after the death of Solomon; for it is ſaid in the firſt verſe of the 25th chapter, "*Theſe are alſo proverbs of Solomon, which the men of "Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied out.*" It was two hundred and fifty years from the time of Solomon to the time of Hezekiah. When a man is famous, and his name is abroad, he is made the putative father of things he never ſaid or did, and this moſt probably has been the caſe with Solomon. It appears to have been the faſhion of that day to make proverbs, as it is now to make *Jeſt-books*, and father them upon thoſe who never ſaw them.

The book of *Eccleſiaſtes*, or the *Preacher*, is alſo aſcribed to Solomon, and that with much reaſon, if not with truth. It is written as the ſolitary reflections of a worn-out debauchee, ſuch as Solomon was, who looking back on ſcenes he can no longer enjoy, cries out, *all is vanity!* A great deal of the metaphor,

and of the ſentiment, is obſcure, moſt probably by tranſlation, but enough is left to ſhew they were ſtrongly pointed in the original.* From what is tranſmitted to us of the character of Solomon, he was witty, oſtentatious, diſſolute, and at laſt melancholy. He lived faſt, and died, tired of the world, at the age of fifty-eight years.

Seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines, are worſe than none, and however it may carry with it the appearance of heightened enjoyment, it defeats all the ſelicity of affection, by leaving it no point to fix upon. Divided love is never happy. This was the caſe with Solomon, and if he could not, with all his pretenſions to wiſdom, diſcover it before hand, he merited, unpitied, the mortification he afterwards endured. In this point of view his preaching is unneceſſary, becauſe to know the conſequences, it is only neceſſary to know the caſe. Seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines would have ſtood in place of the whole book. It was needleſs after this to ſay, that all was vanity and vexation of ſpirit; for it is impoſſible to derive happineſs from the company of thoſe whom we deprive of happineſs.

To be happy in old age, it is neceſſary that we accuſtom ourſelves to objects that can accompany the mind all the way through life, and that we take the reſt as good in their day. The mere man of pleaſure is miſerable in old age, and the mere drudge in buſineſs is but little better: whereas natural philoſophy, mathematical, and mechanical ſcience, are a continual ſource of tranquil pleaſure; and in ſpite of the gloomy dogmas of prieſts and of ſuperſtition, the ſtudy of thoſe things is the ſtudy of the true theology. It teaches man to know and to admire the Creator, for the principles of ſcience are in the creation, and are unchangeable, and of divine origin.

Thoſe who knew Benjamin Franklin will recollect that his mind was ever young; his temper ever ſerene. Science, that never grows grey, was always his miſtreſs. He was never without an object; for when we ceaſe to have an object, we become like an invalid in an hoſpital waiting for death.

SOLOMON'S SONGS, amorous and fooliſh enough, but which wrinkled fanaticiſm, has called divine. The compilers of the bible have placed theſe ſongs after the book of Eccleſiaſtes; and

* *Thoſe that look out of the window ſhall be darkened;* is an obſcure figure in tranſlation for loſs of ſight.

the chronologists have affixed to them the era of 1014 years before Christ, at which time Solomon, according to the same chronology, was nineteen years of age, and was then forming his seraglio of wives and concubines. The bible-makers and the chronologists should have managed this matter a little better, and either have said nothing about the time, or chosen a time less inconsistent with the supposed divinity of those songs; for Solomon was then in the honey-moon of *one thousand* debaucheries.

It should also have occurred to them, that as he wrote, if he did write, the book of Ecclesiastes long after these songs, and in which he exclaims, that all is vanity and vexation of spirit, that he included those songs in that description. This is the more probable, because he says, or somebody for him, Ecclesiastes, chap. ii, ver. 8. *I got me men-singers and women-singers* (most probably to sing those songs) *and musical instruments of all sorts*, and behold, (ver. 11.) *all was vanity and vexation of spirit.* The compilers, however, have done their work but by halves; for as they have given us the songs, they should have given us the tunes that we might sing them.

The books called the books of the Prophets fill up all the remaining part of the bible. They are sixteen in number, beginning with Isaiah and ending with Malachi, of which I have given a list in the observations upon Chronicles. Of these sixteen prophets, all of whom, except the three last, lived within the time the books of Kings and Chronicles were written, two only, Isaiah and Jeremiah, are mentioned in the history of those books. I shall begin with those two, reserving what I have to say, on the general character of the men called prophets, to another part of the work.

Whoever will take the trouble of reading the book ascribed to Isaiah, will find it one of the most wild and disorderly compositions ever put together. It has neither beginning, middle, nor end; and except a short historical part, and a few sketches of history in two or three of the first chapters, is one continued incoherent bombastical rant, full of extravagant metaphor, without application, and destitute of meaning. A school-boy would scarcely have been excusable for writing such stuff. † It is (at least in translation) that kind of composition and false taste, that is properly called prose run mad.

The historical part begins at the 36th chapter, and is continued to the end of the 39th chapter. It relates some matters that are said to have passed during the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah,

† A sober man could not, certainly, think thus; so Thomas you must have been drunk, for your opinion is by no means correct.

at which time Iſaiah lived. This fragment of hiſtory begins and ends abruptly. It has not the leaſt connection with the chapter that precedes it, nor with that which follows it, nor with any other in the book. It is probable that Iſaiah wrote this fragment himſelf, becauſe he was an actor in the circumſtances it treats of; but except this part, there are ſcarcely two chapters that have any connexion with each other. One is entitled, at the beginning of the firſt verſe, the Burden of Babylon; another, the Burden of Moab; another, the Burden of Damaſcus; another, the Burden of Egypt; another, the Burden of the Deſart of the Sea; another, the Burden of the Valley of Viſion: as you would ſay, the ſtory of the knight of the burning mountain; the ſtory of Cinderilla, or the glaſſen ſlipper; the ſtory of the ſleeping beauty in the wood, &c. &c.

I have already ſhewn in the inſtance of the two laſt verſes of Chronicles, and the three firſt in Ezra, that the compilers of the bible mixed and confounded the writings of different authors with each other; which alone, were there no other cauſe, is ſufficient to deſtroy the authenticity of any compilation, becauſe it is more than preſumptive evidence, that the compilers are ignorant who the authors were. A very glaring inſtance of this occurs in the book aſcribed to Iſaiah. The latter part of the 44th chapter, and the beginning of the 45th, ſo far from having been written by Iſaiah, could only have been written by ſome perſon who lived at leaſt an hundred and fifty years after Iſaiah was dead.

Theſe chapters are a compliment to *Cyrus*, who permitted the Jews to return to Jeruſalem from the Babylonian captivity, to rebuild Jeruſalem and the Temple, as is ſtated in Ezra. The laſt verſe of the 44th chapter and the beginning of the 45th, are in the following words: *That ſaith of Cyrus, he is my ſhepherd and ſhall perform all my pleaſure: even ſaying to Jeruſalem, Thou ſhalt be built; and to the Temple, thy foundation ſhall be laid. Thus ſaith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whoſe right hand I have holden to ſubdue nations before him, and I will looſe the loins of kings to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates ſhall not be ſhut. I will go before thee, &c.*

What audacity of church and prieſtly ignorance it is to impoſe this book upon the world as the writing of Iſaiah! when Iſaiah, according to their own chronology, died ſoon after the death of Hezekiah, which was ſix hundred and ninety-eight years before Chriſt; and the decree of Cyrus, in favour of the Jews returning to Jeruſalem, was, according to the ſame chronology, 536 years before

Chriſt, which is a diſtance of time between the two of one hundred and ſixty-two years. I do not ſuppoſe that the compilers of the bible made theſe books, but rather that they picked up ſome looſe anonymous eſſays, and put them together under the names of ſuch authors as beſt ſuited their purpoſe. They have encouraged the impoſition, which is next to inventing it; for it was impoſſible but they muſt have obſerved it.

When we ſee the ſtudied craft of the ſcripture-makers, in making every part of this romantic book of ſchool-boy's eloquence, bend to the monſtrous idea of a ſon of God, begotten by a ghoſt on the body of a virgin, there is no impoſition we are not juſtified in ſuſpecting them of. Every phraſe and circumſtance are marked with the barbarous hand of ſuperſtitious torture, and forced into meanings it was impoſſible they they could have. The head of every chapter, and the top of every page, are blazoned with the names of Chriſt and the church, that the unweary reader might ſuck in the error before he began to read.

Behold, a virgin ſhall conceive, and bear a ſon, Iſaiah, chap. vii, ver. 14. has been interpreted to mean the perſon called Jeſus Chriſt, and his mother Mary, and has been echoed through Chriſtendom for more than a thouſand years: and ſuch has been the rage of this opinion, that ſcarcely a ſpot in it but has been ſtained with blood, and marked with deſolation in conſequence of it. Though it is not my intention to enter into controverſy on ſubjects of this kind, but to confine myſelf to ſhew that the bible is ſpurious, and thus, by taking away the foundation, to overthrow at once the whole ſtructure of ſuperſtition raiſed thereon; I will, however, ſtop a moment to expoſe the fallacious application of this paſſage.

Whether Iſaiah was playing a trick with Ahaz, king of Judah, to whom this paſſage is ſpoken, is no buſineſs of mine. I mean only to ſhew the miſapplication of the paſſage, and that it has no more reference to Chriſt and his mother, than it has to me and my mother.

The ſtory is ſimply this:—The king of Syria, and the king of Iſrael, (I have already mentioned that the Jews were ſplit into two nations, one of which was called Judah, the capital of which was Jeruſalem, and the other Iſrael) made war jointly againſt Ahaz, king of Judah, and marched their armies towards Jeruſalem. Ahaz and his people became alarmed, and the account ſays, ver. 2. "*Their hearts were moved as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.*"

In this ſituation of things, Iſaiah addreſſes himſelf to Ahaz, and

assures him in the *name of the Lord*, the cant phrase of all the prophets, that these two kings should not succeed against him; and to satisfy Ahaz that this should be the case, tells him to ask a sign: this, the account says, Ahaz declined doing, giving as a reason, that he would not tempt the Lord; upon which, Isaiah, who is the speaker, says, ver. 14. "Therefore, the Lord himself shall give you a sign, *Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son;*" and the 16th verse says, "*And before this child shall know to refuse the evil* "*and chuse the good, the land which thou abhorrest* (or dreadest, "meaning Syria and the kingdom of Israel) *shall be forsaken of* "*both her kings.*" Here then was the sign, and the time limited for the completion of the assurance or promise; namely, before this child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good.

Isaiah having committed himself thus far, it became necessary to him, in order to avoid the imputation of being a false prophet, and the consequences thereof, to take measures to make this sign appear. It certainly was not a difficult thing in any time of the world, to find a girl with child, or to make her so; and perhaps Isaiah knew of one before hand; for I do not suppose that the prophets of that day were any more to be trusted than the priests of this. Be that, however, as it may, he says in the next chapter, ver. 2, "And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah "the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah, and *I went* "*unto the prophetess, and she conceived and bare a son.*"

Here then is the whole story, foolish as it is, of this child and this virgin. And it is upon the bare-faced perversion of this story, that the book of Matthew, and the impudence and sordid interest of priests in later times, have founded a theory which they call the gospel; and have applied this story to signify the person they call Jesus Christ, begotten, they say, by a ghost whom they call holy, on the body of a woman engaged in marriage, and afterwards married, whom they call a virgin, seven hundred years after this foolish story was told: a theory which, speaking for myself, I hesitate not to believe and to say, is as fabulous and as false as God is true.*

* *In the 14th verse of the 7th chapter, it is said, that the child should be called Immanuel. But this name was not given to either of the children, otherwise than as a character which the word signifies. That of the prophetess was called Maher-shalal-hash-baz, and that of Mary was called Jesus.*

But to ſhew the impoſition and falſhood of Iſaiah, we have only to attend to the ſequel of this ſtory, which though it is paſſed over in ſilence in the book of Iſaiah, is related in the 28th chapter of 2 Chronicles, and which is, that inſtead of theſe two kings failing in their attempt againſt Ahaz, king of Judah, as Iſaiah had pretended to foretel in the name of the Lord, they *ſucceeded:* Ahaz was defeated and deſtroyed, an hundred and twenty thouſand of his people were ſlaughtered, Jeruſalem was plundered, and two hundred thouſand women, and ſons and daughters, carried into captivity. Thus much for this lying prophet and impoſtor, Iſaiah, and the book of falſhoods that bears his name. I paſs on to the book of

JEREMIAH. This prophet, as he is called, lived in the time that Nebuchadnezzar beſieged Jeruſalem, in the reign of Zedekiah, the laſt king of Judah, and the ſuſpicion was ſtrong againſt him, that he was a traitor in the intereſt of Nebuchadnezzar. Every thing relating to Jeremiah ſhews him to have been a man of an equivocal character. In his metaphor of the potter and the clay, chap. xiii. he guards his prognoſtications in ſuch a crafty manner, as always to leave himſelf a door to eſcape by, in caſe the event ſhould be contrary to what he had predicted.

In the 7th and 8th verſes of that chapter, he makes the Almighty to ſay, "At what inſtant I ſhall ſpeak concerning a nation, and "concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down and deſtroy "it; if that nation againſt whom I have pronounced, turn from "their evil, *I will repent me of the evil that I thought to do unto "them.*" Here was a proviſo againſt one ſide of the caſe; now for the other ſide.

Verſes 9 and 10. "At what inſtant I ſhall ſpeak concerning a "nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if "it do evil in my ſight, that it obey not my voice, then *I will "repent me of the good wherewith I ſaid I would benefit them.*" Here is a proviſo againſt the other ſide; and according to this plan of propheſying, a prophet could never be wrong, however miſtaken the Almighty might be. This ſort of abſurd ſubterfuge, and this manner of ſpeaking of the Almighty, as one would ſpeak of a man, is conſiſtent with nothing but the ſtupidity of the bible.

As to the authenticity of the book, it is only neceſſary to read it, in order to decide poſitively, that, though ſome paſſages recorded therein may have been ſpoken by Jeremiah, he is not the author of the book. The hiſtorical parts, if they can be called by that name, are in the moſt confuſed condition. The ſame events are ſeveral

times repeated, and that in a manner different, and sometimes in contradiction to each other, and this disorder runs even to the last chapter, where the history, upon which the greater part of the book has been employed, begins anew, and ends abruptly. The book has all the appearance of being a medley of unconnected anecdotes, respecting persons and things of that time, collected together in the same rude manner as if the various and contradictory accounts that are to be found in a bundle of newspapers respecting persons and things of the present day, were put together without date, order, or explanation. I will give two or three examples of this kind.

It appears from the account of the 37th chapter, that the army of Nebuchadnezzar, who are called the army of the Chaldeans, had besieged Jerusalem some time, and on their hearing that the army of Pharoah of Egypt were marching against them, they raised the siege and retreated for a time. It may here be proper to mention, in order to understand this confused story, that Nebuchadnezzar had besieged and taken Jerusalem during the reign of Jehoiakin, the predecessor of Zedekiah, and that it was Nebuchadnezzar who had made Zedekiah king, or rather vice-roy; and that this second siege, of which the book of Jeremiah treats, was in consequence of the revolt of Zedekiah against Nebuchadnezzar. This will in some measure account for the suspicion that affixes itself to Jeremiah, of being a traitor, and in the interest of Nebuchadnezzar, whom Jeremiah calls in the 43d chapter, ver. 10, the servant of God.

The 11th verse of this chapter (the 37th) says, "And it came "to pass, that, when the army of the Chaldeans was broken up "from Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army, that Jeremiah went "forth out of Jerusalem to go (as this account states) into the land "of Benjamin, to separate himself thence in the midst of the people. "And when he was in the gate of Benjamin, a captain of the ward "was there, whose name was Irijah, and he took Jeremiah the "prophet, saying, *Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans.* Then "Jeremiah said, *it is false, I fall not away to the Chaldeans.*"—Jeremiah being thus stopt and accused, was, after being examined, committed to prison on suspicion of being a traitor, where he remained, as is stated in the last verse of this chapter.

But the next chapter gives an account of the imprisonment of Jeremiah, which has no connection with *this* account, but ascribes his imprisonment to another circumstance, and for which we must go back to the 21st chapter. It is there stated, ver. 1, That Zede-

kiah sent Pashur, the son of Melchiah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, to Jeremiah, to enquire of him concerning Nebuchadnezzar, whose army was then before Jerusalem; and Jeremiah said to them, ver. 8, "Thus saith the Lord, Behold I set "before you the way of life and the way of death. He that "abideth in this city, shall die by the sword and by the famine, "and by the pestilence, *but he that goeth out and falleth to the "Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto "him for a prey.*"

This interview and conference breaks off abruptly at the end of the 10th verse of the 21st chapter; and such is the disorder of this book, that we have to pass over sixteen chapters upon various subjects, in order to come at the continuation and event of this conference; and this brings us to the first verse of the 38th chapter, as I have just mentioned.

The 38th chapter opens with saying, "Then Shephatiah the "son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the son of Pashur, and Jucal the "son of Shelemiah, and Pashur the son of Malchiah (here are "more persons mentioned than in the 21st chapter) heard the "words that Jeremiah spoke unto the people saying, "*Thus saith "the Lord, he that remaineth in this city, shall die by the sword, by "famine, and by the pestilence; but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans "shall live; for he shall have his life for a prey, and shall live*" (which are the words of the conference). "Therefore (say they "to Zedekiah) we beseech thee, let this man be put to death, "*for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remaineth "in this city, and the hands of all the people in speaking such words "unto them; for this man seeketh not the welfare of the people but the "hurt;*" and at the 6th verse it is said, "Then they took Jere-"miah, and put him into the dungeon of Malchiah."

These two accounts are different and contradictory. The one ascribes his imprisonment to his attempt to *escape out of the city*, the other to his *preaching and prophesying in the city*. The one to his being seized by the guard at the gate, the other to his being accused before Zedekiah by the conferees.*

* *I observed two chapters, 16th and 17th, in the 1st book of Samuel, that contradict each other with respect to David, and the manner he became acquainted with Saul, as the 37th and 38th chapter of the book of Jeremiah contradict each other with respect to the cause of Jeremiah's imprisonment.*

In the next chapter (the 39th) we have another inſtance of the diſordered ſtate of this book; for notwithſtanding the ſiege of the city by Nebuchadnezzar has been the ſubject of ſeveral of the preceding chapters, particularly the 37th and 38th; the 39th chapter begins as if not a word had been ſaid upon the ſubject, and as if the reader was ſtill to be informed of every particular reſpecting it; for it begins with ſaying, ver. 1, "*In the ninth year of Zedekiah, king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and all his army, againſt Jeruſalem, and beſieged it, &c. &c.*

In the 16th chapter of Samuel, it is ſaid, that an evil ſpirit from God troubled Saul, and that his ſervants adviſed him (as a remedy) "to ſeek out a man who was a cunning player upon the harp;" and Saul ſaid, ver. 17, "provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me." Then anſwered one of his ſervants, and ſaid, "Behold, I have ſeen a ſon of Jeſſe, the Bethlehemite, that is "cunning in playing, and a mighty man, and a man of war, and "prudent in matters, and a comely perſon, and the Lord is with him: "wherefore Saul ſent meſſengers unto Jeſſe, and ſaid, ſend me David "thy ſon. And (ver. 21.) David came to Saul, and ſtood before him, "and he loved him greatly, and he became his armour bearer; and when "the evil ſpirit from God was upon Saul, (ver 23.) David took his "harp, and played with his hand, and Saul was refreſhed, and "was well."

But the next chapter (17) gives an account, all different to this, of the manner that Saul and David became acquainted. Here it is aſcribed to David's encounter with Goliah, when David was ſent by his father to carry proviſion to his brethren in the camp. In the 55th verſe of this chapter, it is ſaid, "And when Saul ſaw David go "forth againſt the Philiſtine (Goliah) he ſaid to Abner, the captain "of the hoſt, Abner, whoſe ſon is this youth? And Abner ſaid, as "thy ſoul liveth, O king, I cannot tell. And the king ſaid, enquire "thou whoſe ſon the ſtripling is. And as David returned from the "ſlaughter of the Philiſtine, Abner took him and brought him before "Saul, with the head of the Philiſtine in his hand. And Saul ſaid "unto him, whoſe ſon art thou, thou young man? And David anſwered, "I am the ſon of thy ſervant Jeſſe, the Bethlehemite." Theſe two accounts belie each other, becauſe each of them ſuppoſes Saul and David not to have known each other before. This book, the bible, is too ridiculous even for criticiſm.

But the inſtance in the laſt chapter (the 52d) is ſtill more glaring: for though the ſtory has now been told over and over again, this chapter ſtill ſuppoſes the reader not to know any thing of it; for it begins by ſaying, ver. 1. "*Zezediah was one and twenty years old "when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jeruſalem: "and his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of "Libnath.* Ver. 4. *And it came to paſs in the ninth year of his "reign, in the tenth month, that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon "came, he and all his army, againſt Jeruſalem, and pitched againſt "it, and built forts againſt it,*" &c. &c.

It is not poſſible that any one man, and more particularly Jeremiah, could have been the writer of this book. The errors are ſuch as could not have been committed by any perſon ſetting down to compoſe a work. Were I, or any other man, to write in ſuch a diſordered manner, nobody would read what was written, and every one would ſuppoſe that the writer was in a ſtate of inſanity. The only way therefore to account for the diſorder is, that the book is a medley of detached unauthenticated anecdotes, put together by ſome ſtupid book-maker, under the name of Jeremiah, becauſe many of them refer to him, and to the circumſtances of the times he lived in.

Of the duplicity and of the falſe prediction of Jeremiah, I ſhall mention two inſtances, and then proceed to review the remainder of the bible.

It appears from the 38th chapter, that when Jeremiah was in priſon, Zedekiah ſent for him, and at this interview, which was private, Jeremiah preſſed it ſtrongly on Zedekiah to ſurrender himſelf to the enemy. If, ſays he, ver. 17, *Thou wilt aſſuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy ſoul ſhall live,* &c. Zedekiah was apprehenſive that what paſſed at this conference ſhould be known; and he ſaid to Jeremiah, ver. 25. "If the "princes (meaning thoſe of Judah) hear that I have talked with "thee, and they come unto thee, and ſay unto thee, declare unto "us now what thou haſt ſaid unto the king, hide it not from us, "and we will not put thee to death, and alſo what the king ſaid "unto thee; then thou ſhalt ſay unto them, I preſented my ſup-"plication before the king, that he would not cauſe me to return "to Jonathan's houſe to die there. Then came all the princes unto "Jeremiah, and aſked him, and *he told them according to all the "words the king had commanded.*" Thus this man of God, as he is called, could tell a lie, or very ſtrongly prevaricate, when he

ſuppoſed it would anſwer his purpoſe; for certainly he did not go to Zedekiah to make this application, neither did he make it; he went becauſe he was ſent for; and he employed that opportunity to adviſe Zedekiah to ſurrender himſelf to Nebuchadnezzar.

In the 34th chapter is a prophecy of Jeremiah to Zedekiah in theſe words; ver. 2. "Thus ſaith the Lord, Behold I will give "this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will burn "it with fire, and thou ſhalt not eſcape out of his hand, but ſhalt "ſurely be taken and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes "ſhall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he ſhall "ſpeak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou ſhalt go to Babylon; "*yet hear the word of the Lord, O Zedekiah, king of Judah. Thus* "*ſaith the Lord, thou ſhalt not die by the ſword: but thou ſhalt die in* "*peace, and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings that* "*were before thee, ſo ſhall they burn odours for thee; and they will* "*lament thee, ſaying, Ah, Lord!* FOR I HAVE PRONOUNCED THE "WORD, SAITH THE LORD."

Now, inſtead of Zedekiah beholding the eyes of the king of Babylon, and ſpeaking with him mouth to mouth, and dying in peace, and with the burning of odours, as at the funeral of his fathers (as Jeremiah had declared the Lord himſelf had pronounced) the reverſe, according to the 52d chapter, was the caſe; it is there ſaid, verſe 10. "*That the king of Babylon ſlew the ſons of Zedekiah* "*before his eyes; then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him* "*in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in priſon till* "*the day of his death.*" What then can we ſay of theſe prophets, but that they are impoſtors and lyars?

As for Jeremiah he experienced none of thoſe evils. He was taken into favour by Nebuchadnezzar, who gave him in charge to the captain of the guard, chap. xxxix, ver. 12. "*Take him (ſaid* "*he) and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even* "*as he ſhall ſay unto thee.*" Jeremiah joined himſelf afterwards to Nebuchadnezzar, and went about propheſying for him againſt the Egyptians who had marched to the relief of Jeruſalem while it was beſieged. Thus much for another of the lying prophets, and the book that bears his name.

I have been the more particular in treating of the books aſcribed to Iſaiah and Jeremiah, becauſe thoſe two are ſpoken of in the books of Kings and of Chronicles, which the others are not. The remainder of the books, aſcribed to the men called prophets, I ſhall not trouble myſelf much about, but take them collectively into the

* If the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, surely Zedekiah must have seen

obſervations I ſhall offer on the character of the men ſtyled prophets.

In the former part of the *Age of Reaſon* I have ſaid, that the word prophet was the bible word for poet, and that the flights and metaphors of the Jewiſh poets, have been fooliſhly erected into what are now called prophecies. I am ſufficiently juſtified in this opinion, not only becauſe the books called the Prophecies are written in poetical language; but becauſe there is no word in the bible, except it be the word prophet, that deſcribes what we mean by a poet. I have alſo ſaid that the word ſignified a performer upon muſical inſtruments, of which I have given ſome inſtances; ſuch as that of a company of prophets propheſying with pſalteries, with tabrets, with pipes, with harps, &c. and that Saul propheſied with them. 1 Sam. chap. x, ver. 5. It appears from this paſſage, and from other parts in the book of Samuel, that the word prophet was confined to ſignify poetry and muſic; for the perſon who was ſuppoſed to have a viſionary inſight into concealed things was not called a prophet but a *Se-er*,* 1 Sam. chap. ix, ver. 9; and it was not till after the word *Seer* went out of uſe (which moſt probably was when Saul baniſhed thoſe he called wizards) that the profeſſion of the Seer, or the art of ſeeing, became incorporated into the word prophet.

According to the *modern* meaning of the word prophet and propheſying, it ſignifies foretelling events to a great diſtance of time; and it became neceſſary to the inventors of the goſpel to give it this latitude of meaning, in order to apply or to ſtretch, what they call the propheſies of the old teſtament, to the times of the new. But, according to the old teſtament, the propheſying of the Seer, and afterwards of the Prophet, ſo far as the meaning of the word Seer was incorporated into that of Prophet, had reference only to things of the time then paſſing, or very cloſely connected with it; ſuch as the event of a battle they were going to engage in, or of a journey or of any enterprize they were going to undertake, or of any circumſtance then pending, or of any difficulty they were then in, all of which had immediate reference to themſelves, (as in the caſe already mentioned of Ahaz and Iſaiah, with reſpect to the expreſſion, *Behold a virgin ſhall conceive and bear a ſon*) and not to any diſtant

* *I know not what is the Hebrew word that correſponds to the word* Seer *in Engliſh; but I obſerve it is tranſlated into French by* le Voyant, *from the verb* voir, *to ſee, and which means the perſon who ſees, or the Se-er.*

future time. It was that kind of propheſying that correſponds to what we call fortune-telling, ſuch as caſting nativities, predicting riches, fortunate or unfortunate marriage, conjuring for loſt goods, &c. and it is the fraud of the Chriſtian church, not that of the Jews, and the ignorance and ſuperſtition of modern, not that of ancient times, that have elevated thoſe poetical-muſical-conjuring-dreaming-ſtrolling gentry, into the rank they have ſince had.

But beſides this general character of all the prophets, they had alſo a particular character. They were in parties, and they propheſied for, or againſt, according to the party they were with, as the political and poetical writers of the preſent day write in defence of the party they aſſociate with againſt the other.

After the Jews were divided into two nations, that of Judah and that of Iſrael, each party had its prophets who abuſed and accuſed each other of being falſe prophets, lying prophets, impoſtors, &c. The prophets of the party of Judah propheſied againſt the prophets of the party of Iſrael, and thoſe of the party of Iſrael againſt thoſe of Judah. This party-propheſying ſhewed itſelf immediately on the ſeparation under the firſt two rival kings Rehoboam and Jeroboam. The prophet that curſed, or propheſied againſt, the altar that Jeroboam had built in Bethel, was of the party of Judah, where Rehoboam was king; and he was way-laid on his return home, by a prophet of the party of Iſrael, who ſaid unto him, (1 Kings, chap. x.) *Art thou the man of God that came from Judah? And he ſaid, I am.* Then the prophet of the party of Iſrael ſaid to him, *I am a prophet alſo as thou art* (ſignifying of Judah) *and an angel ſpake unto me by the word of the Lord, ſaying, bring him back with thee unto thine houſe, that he may eat bread and drink water; but,* ſays the 18th verſe, *he lyed unto him.* The event, however, according to the ſtory, is, that the prophet of Judah never got back to Judah; for he was found dead on the road, by the contrivance of the prophet of Iſrael, who no doubt was called a true prophet by his own party, and the prophet of Judah a lying prophet.

In the 3d chapter of the 2d of Kings, a ſtory is related of propheſying, or conjuring, that ſhews in ſeveral particulars, the character of a prophet. Jehoſhaphat, king of Judah, and Joram, king of Iſrael, had, for a while, ceaſed their party animoſity, and entered into an alliance; and thoſe two, together with the king of Edom, engaged in a war againſt the king of Moab. After uniting and marching their armies, the ſtory ſays, they were in great diſtreſs for water, upon which Jehoſhaphat ſaid, "*Is there not here a*

" *prophet of the Lord, that we may enquire of the Lord by him? And* " *one of the ſervants of the king of Iſrael ſaid, here is Eliſha,* (Eliſha " was of the party of Judah) *and Jehoſhaphat the king of Judah* " *ſaid, The word of the Lord is with him.*" The ſtory then ſays, that theſe three kings went down to Eliſha; and when Eliſha (who, as I have ſaid, was a Judahmite prophet) ſaw the king of Iſrael, *he ſaid unto him,* " *What have I to do with thee, get thee to the prophets* " *of thy father, and the prophets of thy mother. Nay, but ſaid the* " *king of Iſrael, the Lord hath called theſe three kings together to deliver* " *them into the hand of the king of Moab.*" (Meaning, becauſe of the diſtreſs they were in for water.) Upon which Eliſha ſaid, " *As* " *the Lord of hoſts liveth, before whom I ſtand, ſurely, were it not* " *that I regard the preſence of Jehoſhaphat, king of Judah, I would* " *not look towards thee, nor ſee thee.*" Here is all the venom and vulgarity of a party prophet. We have now to ſee the performance or manner of prophеſying.

Verſe 15. " *Bring me,* ſaid Eliſha, *a minſtrel. And it came to* " *paſs, when the minſtrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon* " *him.*" Here is the farce of the conjurer. Now for the prophеſy. " *And Eliſha ſaid,* (ſinging, moſt probably, to the tune he was " playing) " *Thus ſaith the Lord—make this valley full of ditches,*" which was juſt telling them what every countryman could have told them, without either fiddle or farce, that the way to get water was to dig for it.

But as every conjurer is not famous alike for the ſame thing, ſo neither were thoſe prophets; for though all of them, at leaſt thoſe I have ſpoken of, were famous for lying, ſome of them excelled in curſing. Eliſha, whom I have juſt mentioned, was a chief in this branch of prophеſying. It was he that curſed the forty-two children in the name of the Lord, whom the two ſhe-bears came and devoured. We are to ſuppoſe that thoſe children were of the party of Iſrael. But as thoſe who will curſe will lye, there is juſt as much credit to be given to this ſtory of Eliſha's two ſhe-bears, as there is to that of the dragon of Wantley, of whom it is ſaid,

> Poor children three, devoured he,
> That could not with him grapple;
> And at one ſup, he eat them up,
> As a man would eat an apple.

THERE were another deſcription of men called prophets, that amuſed themſelves with dreams and viſions but whether by night

or by day we know not. Theſe, if they were not quite harmleſs, were but little miſchievous. Of this claſs, are,

EZEKIEL and DANIEL; and the firſt queſtion upon thoſe books, as upon all the others, is, are they genuine? that is, were they written by Ezekiel and Daniel?

Of this there is no proof; but ſo far as my own opinion goes, I am more inclined to believe they were than that they were not. My reaſons for this opinion are as follow:

Firſt, becauſe thoſe books do not contain internal evidence to prove they were *not* written by Ezekiel and Daniel, as the books aſcribed to Moſes, Joſhua, Samuel, &c. &c. prove they were not written by Moſes, Joſhua, Samuel, &c. &c.

Secondly, becauſe they were not written till after the Babyloniſh captivity began; and there is good reaſon to believe, that not any book in the bible was written before that period; at leaſt it is proveable, from the books themſelves, as I have already ſhewn, that they were not written till after the commencement of the Jewiſh monarchy.

Thirdly, becauſe the manner in which the books aſcribed to Ezekiel and Daniel are written, agrees with the condition theſe men were in at the time of writing them.

Had the numerous commentators and prieſts who have fooliſhly employed or waſted their time in pretending to expound and unriddle thoſe books, been carried into captivity as Ezekiel and Daniel were, it would greatly have improved their intellects in comprehending the reaſon for this mode of writing; and have ſaved them the trouble of racking their invention, as they have done, to no purpoſe; for they would have found that themſelves would be obliged to write, whatever they had to write, reſpecting their own affairs, or thoſe of their friends, or of their country, in a concealed manner as thoſe men have done.

Theſe two books differ from all the reſt; for it is only theſe that are filled with accounts of dreams and viſions; and this difference aroſe from the ſituation the writers were in as priſoners of war or priſoners of ſtate in a foreign country, which obliged them to convey even the moſt trifling information to each other, and all their political projects or opinions in obſcure and metaphorical terms. They pretended to have dreamed dreams, and ſeen viſions, becauſe it was unſafe for them to ſpeak facts or plain language. We ought however to ſuppoſe that the perſons to whom they wrote underſtood what they meant, and that it was not intended any body elſe

ſhould. But theſe buſy commentators and prieſts have been puzzling their wits to find out what it was not intended they ſhould know, and with which they have nothing to do.

Ezekiel and Daniel were carried priſoners to Babylon, under the firſt captivity, in the time of Johoichim, nine years before the ſecond captivity in the time of Zedekiah. The Jews were then ſtill numerous, and had conſiderable force at Jeruſalem; and as it is natural to ſuppoſe that men, in the ſituation of Ezekiel and Daniel, would be meditating the recovery of their country and their own deliverance, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the accounts of dreams and viſions, with which theſe books are filled, are no other than a diſguiſed mode of correſpondence to facilitate thoſe objects. It ſerved them as a cypher or ſecret alphabet. If they are not this, they are tales, reveries, and nonſenſe; or at leaſt a fanciful way of wearing off the weariſomeneſs of captivity; but the preſumption is, they are the former.

Ezekiel begins his book by ſpeaking of a viſion of *cherubims*, and of a viſion of a *wheel within a wheel*, which he ſays he ſaw by the river Chebar in the land of his captivity. Is it not reaſonable to ſuppoſe that by the cherubims he meant the temple of Jeruſalem, where they had figures of cherubims; and by a wheel within a wheel (which as a figure has always been underſtood to ſignify political contrivance) the project or means of recovering Jeruſalem. In the latter part of his book he ſuppoſes himſelf tranſported to Jeruſalem, and into the temple; and he refers back to the viſion on the river Chebar, and ſays, chap. xliii, ver. 3, that this laſt viſion was like the viſion on the river Chebar; which indicates that thoſe pretended dreams and viſions had for their object the recovery of Jeruſalem, and nothing further.

As to the romantic interpretations and applications, wild as the dreams and viſions they undertake to explain, which commentators and prieſts have made of thoſe books, that of converting them into things which they call propheſies, and making them bend to times and circumſtances, as far remote even as the preſent day, it ſhews the fraud or the extreme folly to which credulity or prieſtcraft can go.

Scarcely any thing can be more abſurd than to ſuppoſe, that men ſituated as Ezekiel and Daniel were, whoſe country was over-run and in the poſſeſſion of the enemy, all their friends and relations in captivity abroad, or in ſlavery at home, or maſſacred, or in continual danger of it; ſcarcely any thing, I ſay, can be more abſurd than

to ſuppoſe, that ſuch men ſhould find nothing to do, but that of employing their time and their thoughts about what was to happen to other nations a thouſand or two thouſand years after they were dead: at the ſame time nothing more natural than that they ſhould meditate the recovery of Jeruſalem, and their own deliverance, and that this was the ſole object of all their obſcure and apparently frantic writing contained in thoſe books.

In this ſenſe, the mode of writing uſed in thoſe two books, being forced by neceſſity, and not adopted by choice, is not irrational. But if we are to view the books as propheſies, they are falſe. In the 29th chapter of Ezekiel, ſpeaking of Egypt, it is ſaid, ver. 11, "No foot of man ſhall paſs through it, nor foot of beaſt ſhall paſs "through it; *neitherſhall it be inhabited for forty years.*" This is what never came to paſs, and conſequently it is falſe as all the books I have already reviewed are. I here cloſe this part of the ſubject.

In the former part of the *Age of Reaſon*, I have ſpoken of Jonah, and of the ſtory of him and the whale. A fit ſtory for ridicule, if it was written to be believed; or of laughter, if it was intended to try what credulity could ſwallow; for if it could ſwallow Jonah and the whale, it can ſwallow any thing.

But, as is already ſhewn in the obſervations on the book of Job and of Proverbs, it is not always certain which of the books in the bible are originally Hebrew, or only tranſlations from books of the Gentiles into Hebrew; and as the book of Jonah, ſo far from treating of the affairs of the Jews, ſays nothing upon that ſubject, but treats altogether of the Gentiles, it is more probable that it is a book of the Gentiles than of the Jews; and that it has been written as a fable to expoſe the nonſenſe, and ſatyrize the vicious and malignant character of a bible prophet or a predicting prieſt.

Jonah is repreſented, firſt, as a diſobedient prophet, running away from his miſſion, and taking ſhelter on board a veſſel of the Gentiles bound from Joppa to Tarſhiſh; as if he ignorantly ſuppoſed, by ſuch a paltry contrivance, he could hide himſelf where God could not find him. The veſſel is overtaken by a ſtorm at ſea, and the mariners, all of whom are Gentiles, believing it to be a judgment on account of ſome-one on board who had committed a crime, agreed to caſt lots to diſcover the offender, and the lot fell upon Jonah: But before this, they had caſt all their wares and merchandize over-board, to lighten the veſſel, while Jonah, like a ſtupid fellow, was faſt a-ſleep in the hold.

After the lot had deſignated Jonah to be the offender, they

queſtioned him to know who and what he was? and he told them *he was an Hebrew*; and, the ſtory implies that he confeſſed himſelf to be guilty. But theſe Gentiles, inſtead of ſacrificing him at once, without pity or mercy, as a company of bible prophets or prieſts would have done by a Gentile in the ſame caſe, and as it is related Samuel had done by Agag, and Moſes by the women and children, they endeavoured to ſave him, though at the riſk of their own lives: for the account ſays, "*Nevertheleſs*, (that is, though Jonah was a Jew and a foreigner, and the cauſe of all their misfortunes, and the loſs of their cargo) "*the men rowed hard to bring the boat to* "*land, but they could not, for the ſea wrought, and was tempeſtuous* "*againſt them.*" Still, however, they were unwilling to put the fate of the lot into execution, and they cried, ſays the account, unto the Lord, ſaying, "*We beſeech thee, O Lord, let us not periſh* "*for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood; for thou, O* "*Lord, has done as it pleaſed thee.*" Meaning thereby, that they did not preſume to judge Jonah guilty, ſince he might be innocent, but that they conſidered the lot that had fallen upon him, as a decree of God, or as it *pleaſed God*. The addreſs of this prayer ſhews that the Gentiles worſhipped *one Supreme Being*, and that they were not idolators, as the Jews repreſented them to be. But the ſtorm ſtill continuing, and the danger increaſing, they put the fate of the lot into execution, and caſt Jonah into the ſea, where, according to the ſtory, a great fiſh ſwallowed him whole and alive.

We have now to conſider Jonah ſecurely houſed from the ſtorm in the fiſh's belly. Here we are told that he prayed; but the prayer is a made up prayer, taken from various parts of the pſalms, without connection or conſiſtency, and adapted to the diſtreſs, but not at all to the condition that Jonah was in. It is ſuch a prayer as a Gentile, who might know ſomething of the pſalms, could copy out for him. This circumſtance alone, were there no other, is ſufficient to indicate that the whole is a made up ſtory. The prayer, however, is ſuppoſed to have anſwered the purpoſe, and the ſtory goes on, (taking up at the ſame time the cant language of a bible prophet) ſaying, "*The Lord ſpake unto the fiſh*, and it vomited out "Jonah upon the dry land."

Jonah then receives a ſecond miſſion to Nineveh, with which he ſets out, and we have now to conſider him as a preacher. The diſtreſs he is repreſented to have ſuffered, the remembrance of his own diſobedience as the cauſe of it, and the miraculous eſcape he is ſuppoſed to have had, were ſufficient, one would conceive, to have

impreſſed him with ſympathy and benevolence in the execution of his miſſion; but inſtead of this, he enters the city with denunciation and malediction in his mouth, crying, "*Yet forty days, and Nineveh ſhall be overthrown.*"

We have now to conſider this ſuppoſed miſſionary in the laſt act of his miſſion; and here it is that the malevolent ſpirit of a Bible-prophet, or of a predicting prieſt, appears in all the blackneſs of character, that men aſcribe to the being they call the devil.

Having pupliſhed his prediction, he withdrew, ſays the ſtory, to the eaſt ſide of the city.—But for what? not to contemplate in retirement the mercy of his Creator to himſelf, or to others, but wait, with malignant impatience, the deſtruction of Nineveh. It came to paſs, however, as the ſtory relates, that the Ninevites reformed, and that God, according to the Bible phraſe, repented him of the evil he had ſaid he would do unto them, and did it not. This, ſaith the firſt verſe of the laſt chapter, *diſpleaſed Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.* His obdurate heart had rather that all Nineveh ſhould be deſtroyed, and every ſoul, young and old, periſh in it's ruins, than that his prediction ſhould not be fulfilled. To expoſe the character of a prophet ſtill more, a gourd is made to grow up in the night, that promiſes him an agreeable ſhelter from the heat of the ſun, in the place to which he is retired; and the next morning it dies.

Here the rage of the prophet becomes exceſſive, and he is ready to deſtroy himſelf. "*It is better*, ſaid he, *for me to die than to live.*" This brings on a ſuppoſed expoſtulation between the Almighty and the prophet; in which the former ſays, "*Doeſt thou well to be angry for the gourd? And Jonah ſaid, I do well to be angry, even unto death. Then ſaid the Lord, Thou haſt had pity on the gourd, for which thou haſt not laboured, neither madeſt it to grow, which came up in a night; and ſhould not I ſpare Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than threeſcore thouſand perſons, that cannot diſcern between their right hand and their left?*"

Here is both the winding up of the ſatire, and the moral of the fable. As a ſatire, it ſtrikes againſt the character of all the Bible prophets, and againſt all the indiſcriminate judgments upon men, women, and children, with which this lying book, the Bible, is crowded; ſuch as Noah's flood, the deſtruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the extirpation of the Canaanites, even to ſucking infants, and women with child; becauſe the ſame reflection, *that there are more than threeſcore thouſand perſons that cannot diſcern between*

their right hand and their left, meaning young children, applies to all their cafes. It fatirizes alfo the fuppofed partiality of the Creator for one nation, more than for another.

As a moral, it preaches againft the malevolent fpirit of prediction; for as certainly as a man predicts ill, he becomes inclined to wifh it. The pride of having his judgment right, hardens his heart, till at laft he beholds with fatisfaction, or fees with difappointment, the accomplifhment or the failure of his predictions.——This book ends with the fame kind of ftrong and well directed point againft prophets, prophecies, and indifcriminate judgments, as the chapter that Benjamin Franklin made for the Bible, about Abraham and the ftranger, ending againft the intolerant fpirit of religious perfecution. Thus much for the book of Jonah.

Of the poetical parts of the Bible, that are called prophecies, I have fpoken in the former part of the *Age of Reafon*, and already in this; where I have faid that the word *prophet* is the Bible-word for *poet;* and that the flights and metaphors of thofe poets, many of which are become obfcure by the lapfe of time and the change of circumftance, have been ridiculoufly erected into things, called prophecies, and applied to purpofes the writers never thought of. When a prieft quotes any of thofe paffages, he unriddles it agreeably to his own views, and impofes that explanation upon his congregation as the meaning of the writer. The *whore of Babylon* has been the common whore of all the prieffs, and each has accufed the other of keeping the ftrumpet: fo well do they agree in their explanations.

Here now remain only a few books, which they call the books of the leffer prophets; and as I have already fhewn that the greater are impoftors, it would be cowardice to difturb the repofe of the little ones. Let them fleep then, in the arms of their nurfes, the prieffs, and both be forgotten together.

I have gone through the Bible, as a man would go through a wood with an axe on his fhoulder, and fell trees: Here they lie; and the prieffs, if they can, may replant them. They may, perhaps, ftick them in the ground, but they will never make them grow.——I pafs on to the books of the New Teftament.

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The New Teftament, they tell us, is founded upon the prophecies of the Old; if fo, it muft follow the fate of it's foundation.

As it is nothing extraordinary that a woman fhould be with child

before she was married, and that the son she might bring forth should be executed, even unjustly; I see no reason for not believing that such a woman as Mary, and such a man as Joseph, and Jesus, existed; their mere existence is a matter of indifference, about which there is no ground, either to believe, or to disbelieve, and which comes under the common head of, *It may be so; and what then?* The probability, however, is, that there were such persons, or at least such as resembled them in part of the circumstances, because almost all romantic stories have been suggested by some actual circumstance; as the adventures of Robinson Crusoe, not a word of which is true, were suggested by the case of Alexander Selkirk.

It is not then the existence, or non-existence, of the persons that I trouble myself about; it is the fable of Jesus Christ, as is told in the New Testament, and the wild and visionary doctrine raised thereon, against which I contend. The story, taking it as it is told, is blasphemously obscene. It gives an account of a young woman engaged to be married, and while under this engagement, she is, to speak plain language, debauched by a ghost, under the impious pretence (Luke, chap. i. ver. 35,) that "*the Holy Ghost, shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.*" Notwithstanding which, Joseph afterwards marries her as his wife, and in his turn rivals the ghost. This is putting the story into intelligible language, and when told in this manner, there is not a priest but must be ashamed to own it.* †

Obscenity in matters of faith, however wrapped up, is always a token of fable and imposture; for it is necessary to our serious belief in God, that we do not connect it with stories that run, as it does, into ludicrous interpretations. This story is, upon the face of it, the same kind of story as that of Jupiter and Leda, or Jupiter and Europa, or any of the amorous adventures of Jupiter; and shews, as is already stated in the former part of the *Age of Reason*, that the Christian faith is built upon the heathen mythology.

As the historical parts of the New Testament, so far as concerns Jesus Christ, are confined to a very short space of time, less than two years, and all within the same country, and nearly to the same spot, the discordance of time, place, and circumstance, which detects the fallacy of the books of the Old Testament, and proves them to be impositions, cannot be expected to be found here in the same abun-

* *Mary, the supposed virgin mother of Jesus, had several other children, sons and daughters. See Matt. chap. xiii. ver.* 55, 56.

† Infernal "Obscenity" is a sufficiently mi

dance. The New Teſtament, compared with the Old, is like a farce of one act, in which there is not room for very numerous violations of the unities. There are, however, ſome glaring contradictions, which, excluſive of the fallacy of the pretended prophecies, are ſufficient to ſhew the ſtory of Jeſus Chriſt to be falſe.

I lay it down as a poſition which cannot be controverted, firſt, that the *agreement* of all the parts of a ſtory does not prove the ſtory to be true, becauſe the parts may agree, and the whole may be falſe; ſecondly that the *diſagreement* of the parts of a ſtory proves that the *whole cannot be true*. The agreement does not prove truth, but the diſagreement proves falſehood poſitively.

The hiſtory of Jeſus Chriſt is contained in the four books aſcribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The firſt chapter of Matthew begins with giving a genealogy of Jeſus Chriſt; and in the third chapter of Luke, there is alſo given a genealogy of Jeſus Chriſt. Did theſe two agree, it would not prove the geneal gy to be true, becauſe it might, nevertheleſs be a fabrication; but if they contradict each other in every particular, it proves falſehood abſolutely. If Matthew ſpeak truth, Luke ſpeaks falſehood: and if Luke ſpeak truth, Matthew ſpeaks falſehood: and as there is no authority for believing one more than the other, there is no authority for believing either; and if they cannot be believed, even in the very firſt thing they ſay, and ſet out to prove, they are not entitled to be believed in any thing they ſay afterwards. Truth is an uniform thing; and as to inſpiration and revelation, were we to admit it, it is impoſſible to ſuppoſe it can be contradictory. Either then the men called apoſtles were impoſtors, or the books aſcribed to them have been written by other perſons, and fathered upon them, as is the caſe in the Old Teſtament.

The book of Matthew gives, chap. 1, ver. 6, a genealogy by name from David, up, through Joſeph, the huſband of Mary, to Chriſt; and makes there to be *twenty-eight* generations. The book of Luke gives alſo a genealogy by name from Chriſt, through Joſeph, the huſband of Mary, down to David, and makes there to be *forty-three* generations; beſides which, there are only the two names of David and Joſeph that are alike in the two liſts. I here inſert both genealogical liſts, and, for the ſake of perſpicuity and compariſon, have placed them both in the ſame direction, that is, from Joſeph down to David.

Genealogy, according to Matthew.	*Genealogy, according to Luke.*
Chriſt.	Chriſt. Mary.
2 Joſeph.	2 Joſeph.
3 Jacob.	3 Heli.

Genealogy, according to Matthew.

4 Matthan.
5 Eleazar.
6 Eliud.
7 Achim.
8 Sadoc.
9 Azor.
10 Eliakim.
11 Abiud.
12 Zorobabel.
13 Salathiel.
14 Jechonias.
15 Josias.
16 Amon.
17 Manasses.
18 Ezekias.
19 Achaz.
20 Joatham.
21 Ozias.
22 Joram.
23 Josaphat.
24 Asa.
25 Abia.
26 Roboam.
27 Solomon.
28 David.

Genealogy, according to Luke.

4 Matthat.
5 Levi.
6 Melchi.
7 Janna.
8 Joseph.
9 Mattathias.
10 Amos.
11 Naum.
12 Esli.
13 Nagge.
14 Maath.
15 Mattathias.
16 Semi.
17 Joseph.
18 Juda.
19 Joanna.
20 Rhesa.
21 Zorobabel.
22 Salathiel.
23 Neri.
24 Melchi.
25 Addi.
26 Cosam.
27 Elmodam.
28 Er.
29 Jose.
30 Eliezer.
31 Joram.
32 Matthat.
33 Levi.
34 Simeon.
35 Juda.
36 Joseph.
37 Jonan.
38 Eliakim.
39 Melea.
40 Menan.
41 Mattatha.
42 Nathan.
43 David.

From the birth of David to the birth of Chriſt is upwards of 1080 years; and as the life-time of Chriſt is not included, there are but 27 full generations. To find therefore the average age of each perſon mentioned in the firſt liſt, at the time his firſt ſon was born, it is only neceſſary to divide 1080 by 27, which gives 40 years for each perſon. As the lifetime of man was then but of the ſame extent it is now, it is an abſurdity to ſuppoſe, that 27 following generations ſhould all be old bachelors, before they married; and the more ſo, when we are told, that Solomon, the next in ſucceſſion to David, had a houſe full of wives and miſtreſſes, before he was twenty-one years of age. ~~So far from~~ this genealogy being a ſolemn truth, it is not ~~even~~ a ~~reaſonable~~ lie. The liſt of Luke gives about twenty-ſix years for the average age, and this is too much.

Now, if theſe men, Matthew and Luke, ſet out with a falſehood between them (as theſe two accounts ſhew they do) in the very commencement of their hiſtory of Jeſus Chriſt, and of who, and of what he was, what authority (as I have before aſked) is there left for believing the ſtrange things they tell us afterwards? If they cannot be believed in their account of his natural genealogy, how are we to believe them, when they tell us, he was the ſon of God, begotten by a ghoſt, and that an angel announced this in ſecret to his mother? If they lied in one genealogy, why are we to believe them in the other? If his natural genealogy be manufactured, which it certainly is, why are we not to ſuppoſe, that his celeſtial genealogy is manufactured alſo; and that the whole is fabulous? Can any man of ſerious reflection hazard his future happineſs upon the belief of a ſtory naturally impoſſible; repugnant to every idea of decency; and related by perſons already detected of falſehood? Is it not more ſafe, that we ſtop ourſelves at the plain, pure, and unmixed belief of one God, which is deiſm, than that we commit ourſelves on an ocean of improbable, irrational, indecent, and contradictory tales?—*

The firſt queſtion, however, upon the books of the New Teſtament, as upon thoſe of the Old, is, Are they genuine? were they written by the perſons to whom they are aſcribed? for it is upon this ground only, that the ſtrange things related therein, have been credited. Upon this point, there is no *direct proof for, or againſt;* and all that this ſtate of a caſe proves, is *doubtfulneſs;* and doubtfulneſs is the †oppoſite of belief. The ſtate, therefore, that the books are in, proves againſt themſelves as far as this kind of proof can go.

But, excluſive of this, the preſumption is, that the books called the

* Is this tongue blaſphuming still? When?
† This is the Philoſopher.

Evangeliſts, and aſcribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, were not written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; and that they are impoſitions. The diſordered ſtate of the hiſtory in theſe four books, the ſilence of one book upon matters related in the other, and the diſagreement that is to be found among them, implies, that they are the productions of ſome unconnected individuals, many years after the things they pretend to relate, each of whom made his own legend; and not the writings of men living intimately together, as the men called apoſtles are ſuppoſed to have done: In fine, that they have been manufactured, as the books of the Old Teſtament have been, by other perſons, than thoſe whoſe names they bear. #

The ſtory of the angel, announcing, what the church calls the *immaculate conception*, is not ſo much as mentioned in the books aſcribed to Mark and John; and is differently related in Matthew and Luke. The former ſays, the angel appeared to Joſeph; the latter ſays, it was to Mary; but either Joſeph or Mary was the worſt evidence that could be thought of; for it was others that ſhould have teſtified *for them*, and not they for themſelves. Were any girl that is now with child to ſay, and even to ſwear it, that ſhe was gotten with child by a ghoſt, and that an angel told her ſo, would ſhe be believed? Certainly ſhe would not. Why then are we to believe the ſame thing of another whom we never ſaw, told by nobody knows who, nor when, nor where? How ſtrange and inconſiſtent is it, that the ſame circumſtances that would weaken the belief even of a probable ſtory, ſhould be given as a motive for believing this one that has, upon the face of it, every token of abſolute impoſſibility, and impoſture.

The ſtory of Herod deſtroying all the children under two years old, belongs altogether to the writer of the book of Matthew; and not one of the reſt mentions any thing about it. Had ſuch a circumſtance been true, the univerſality of it muſt have made it known to all the writers; and the thing would have been too ſtriking, to have been omitted by any. The writer tells us, that Jeſus eſcaped this ſlaughter, becauſe Joſeph and Mary were warned by an angel, to flee with him into Egypt; but he forgot to make proviſion for John, who was then under two years of age. † John, however, who ſtaid behind, fared as well as Jeſus, who fled; and therefore the ſtory circumſtantially belies itſelf.

Not any two of theſe writers agree in reciting, *exactly in the ſame words*, the written inſcription, ſhort as it is, which they tell us, was put over Chriſt when he was crucified: And beſides this, Mark ſays,

Vide Vol. I. Page 383

† John was not born in Bethlehem where the children

He was crucified at the third hour (nine in the morning); and John ſays it was the ſixth hour (twelve at noon).*

The inſcription is thus ſtated in thoſe books.

Matthew—This is Jeſus the king of the Jews.

Mark—The king of the Jews.

Luke—This is the king of the Jews.

John—Jeſus of Nazareth the king of the Jews.

We may infer from theſe circumſtances, trivial as they are, that thoſe writers, whoever they were, and in whatever time they lived, were not preſent at the ſcene. The only one of the men, called apoſtles, who appears to have been near the ſpot, was Peter; and when he was accuſed of being one of Jeſus's followers, it is ſaid (Matthew, chap. xxvi. ver. 74), "*Then Peter began to curſe and ſwear, ſaying, I know not the man:*" Yet we are now called upon to believe this ſame Peter, convicted, by their own account of perjury. For what reaſon, or on what authority, ſhould we do this?

The accounts that are given of the circumſtances, that they tell us attended the crucifixion, are differently related in thoſe four books.

The book aſcribed to Matthew ſays, "*There was darkneſs over all the land, from the ſixth hour unto the ninth hour—that the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom—that there was an earthquake—that the rocks rent—that the graves opened—that the bodies of many of the ſaints that ſlept, aroſe, and came out of their graves after the reſurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.*" Such is the account which this daſhing writer of the book of Matthew gives; but in which he is not ſupported by the writers of the other books.

The writer of the book aſcribed to Mark, in detailing the circumſtances of the crucifixion, makes no mention of any earthquake, nor of the rocks rending, nor of the graves opening, nor of the dead men walking out. The writer of the book of Luke is ſilent alſo upon the ſame points. And as to the writer of the book of John, though he details all the circumſtances of the crucifixion down to the burial of Chriſt, he ſays nothing about either the darkneſs—the veil of the temple—the earthquake—the rocks—the graves—nor the dead men.

Now if it had been true, that thoſe things had happened; and if,

* *According to John, the ſentence was not paſſed till about the ſixth hour (noon), and conſequently, the execution could not be till the afternoon: But Mark ſays expreſsly, that he was crucified at the third hour (nine in the morning), chap.* 15, *ver.* 25. *John, chap. xix. ver.* 14.

the writers of those books had lived at the time they did happen, and had been the persons they are said to be, namely, the four men called apostles, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, it was not possible for them, as true historians, even without the aid of inspiration, not to have recorded them. The things, supposing them to have been facts, were of too much notoriety not to have been known, and of too much importance not to have been told. All these supposed apostles must have been witnesses of the earthquake, if there had been any; for it was not possible for them to have been absent from it; the opening of the graves, and the resurrection of the dead men, and their walking about the city, is of still greater importance than the earthquake. An earthquake is always possible, and natural, and proves nothing; but this opening of the graves is supernatural, and in point to their doctrine, their cause, and their apostleship. Had it been true, it would have filled up whole chapters of those books, and been the chosen theme, and general chorus of all the writers; but instead of this, little and trivial things, and mere prattling conversations of, *he said this*, and *she said that*, are often tediously detailed, while this most important of all, had it been true, is passed off in a slovenly manner, by a single dash of the pen, and that by one writer only, and not so much as hinted at by the rest.

† It is an easy thing to tell a lie, but it is difficult to support the lie after it is told. The writer of the book of Matthew should have told us who the saints were that came to life again, and went into the city, and what became of them afterwards, and who it was that saw them; for he is not hardy enough to say that he saw them himself;—whether they came out naked, and all in natural buff, he-saints and she-saints; or whether they came full dressed, and where they got their dresses; whether they went to their former habitations, and reclaimed their wives, their husbands, and their property, and how they were received; whether they entered ejectments for the recovery of their possessions, or brought actions of *crim. con.* against the rival interlopers; whether they remained on earth, and followed their former occupations of preaching or working; or whether they died again, or went back to their graves alive, and buried themselves.

Strange indeed, that an army of saints should return to life, and nobody know who they were, nor who it was that saw them, and that not a word more should be said upon the subject, nor these saints have any thing to tell us! Had it been the prophets who (as we are told) had formerly prophesied of these things, *they* must have had a

† The respected writer often experienced this in his own writings. Ben. Rice.

great deal to say. They could have told us every thing, and we should have had posthumous prophecies, with notes and commentaries upon the first, a little better at least than we have now. Had it been Moses, and Aaron, and Joshua, and Samuel, and David, not an unconverted Jew had remained in all Jerusalem. Had it been John the Baptist, and the saints of the times then present, every body would have known them, and they would have out-preached and out-famed all the other apostles.[1] But instead of this, these saints are made to pop up like Jonah's gourd in the night, for no purpose at all, but to wither in the morning. Thus much for this part of the story.

The tale of the resurrection follows that of the crucifixion; and in this as well as in that, the writers, whoever they were, disagree so much, as to make it evident that none of them were there.

The book of Matthew states that when Christ was put in the sepulchre, the Jews applied to Pilate for a watch or a guard to be placed over the sepulchre, to prevent the body being stolen by the disciples; and that in consequence of this request, the sepulchre *was made sure, sealing the stone* that covered the mouth, and setting a watch. But the other books say nothing about this application, nor about the sealing, nor the guard, nor the watch; and according to their accounts there were none.[1] Matthew, however, follows up this part of the story of the guard or the watch with a second part, that I shall notice in the conclusion, as it serves to detect the fallacy of those books.

The book of Matthew, continues it's account, and says (chap. xxviii. ver. 1.), that at the end of the sabbath, as it began to *dawn*, towards the first day of the week, came *Mary Magdalene*, and the *other Mary*, to see the sepulchre. Mark says it was sun-rising, and John says it was dark.[2] Luke says it was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and *Mary the mother* of James, and *other women*, that came to the sepulchre; and John states, that Mary Magdalene came alone.[3] So well do they agree about their first evidence! they all, however, appear to have known most about Mary Magdalene; she was a woman of a large acquaintance, and it was not an ill conjecture that she might be upon the stroll.

The book of Matthew goes on to say (ver. 2.), "And behold there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and *sat upon it*."[4] But the other books say nothing about any earthquake, nor about the angel rolling back the stone, and *sitting upon it;* and according to their accounts, there was no angel *sitting there.* Mark says, the angel was *within the sepulchre, sitting* on the right side.[5] Luke

says there were two, and they were both standing up; and John says, they were both sitting down, one at the head, and the other at the feet.

Matthew says, that the angel that was sitting upon the stone on the outside of the sepulchre, told the two Marys, that Christ was risen, and that the women went *away* quickly. Mark says, that the women upon seeing the stone rolled away, and wondering at it, went *into* the sepulchre, and that it was the angel that was *sitting* within on the right side that told them so. Luke says, it was the two angels that were standing up; and John says, it was Jesus Christ himself that told it to Mary Magdalene; and that she did not go into the sepulchre, but only stooped down and looked in.

Now if the writers of these four books had gone into any court of justice, to prove an *alibi*, (for it is of the nature of an alibi that is here attempted to be proved, namely, the absence of a dead body, by supernatural means,) and had given their evidence in the same contradictory manner as it is here given, they would have been in danger of having their ears cropt for perjury, and would have justly deserved it. Yet this is the evidence, and these are the books, that have been imposed upon the world, as being given by divine inspiration, and as the unchangeable word of God.

The writer of the book of Matthew, after giving this account, relates a story that is not to be found in any of the other books, and which is the same I have just before alluded to.

"Now, says he (that is, after the conversation the women had had with the angel sitting upon the stone), behold some of the watch (meaning the watch that he had said had been placed over the sepulchre) came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done; and when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, that his disciples came by night, and stole him away while we *slept;* and if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught; and this saying (that his disciples stole him away) is commonly reported among the Jews *until this day.*"

The expression, *until this day*, is an evidence that the book ascribed to Matthew was not written by Matthew, and that it has been manufactured long after the times and things of which it pretends to treat; for the expression implies a great length of intervening time. It would be inconsistent in us to speak in this manner of any thing happening in our own time. To give, therefore, intelligible meaning to

 Illogical

the expreſſion, we muſt ſuppoſe a lapſe of ſome generations at leaſt, for this manner of ſpeaking carries the mind back to ancient time.

The abſurdity alſo of the ſtory is worth noticing; for it ſhews the writer of this book of Matthew to have been an exceeding weak and fooliſh man. He tells a ſtory, that contradicts itſelf in point of poſſibility; for though the guard, if there were any, might be made to ſay that the body was taken away while they were *aſleep*, that ſame ſleep muſt alſo have prevented their knowing how, and by whom it was done; and yet they are made to ſay, that it was the diſciples who did it. Were a man to tender his evidence of ſomething that he ſhould ſay was done, and of the manner of doing it, and of the perſons who did it, while he was aſleep, and could know nothing of the matter, ſuch evidence could not be received: It will do well enough for Teſtament evidence, but not for any thing where truth is concerned.

I come now to that part of the evidence in thoſe books, that reſpects the pretended appearance of Chriſt after this pretended reſurrection.

The writer of the book of Matthew relates, that the angel that was ſitting on the ſtone at the mouth of the ſepulchre, ſaid to the two Marys, chap. xxviii. ver. 7, "*Behold Chriſt is gone before you into Galilee, there ſhall ye ſee him; lo, I have told you.*" And the ſame writer, at the two next verſes (8, 9,), makes Chriſt himſelf to ſpeak to the ſame purpoſe to theſe women, immediately after the angel had told it to them, and that they ran quickly to tell it to the diſciples; and at the 16th verſe it is ſaid, "*Then the eleven diſciples went away into Galilee*, into a mountain where Jeſus had appointed them; and when they ſaw him, they worſhipped him."

But the writer of the book of John tells a ſtory very different to this; for he ſays, chap. xx. ver. 19, "*Then the ſame day at evening, being the firſt day of the week*, (that is, the ſame day that Chriſt is ſaid to have riſen,) *when the doors were ſhut, where the diſciples were aſſembled, for fear of the Jews, came Jeſus and ſtood in the midſt of them.*"

According to Matthew, the eleven were marching to Galilee, to meet Jeſus in a mountain, by his own appointment, at the very time when, according to John, they were aſſembled in another place, and that not by appointment, but in ſecret, for fear of the Jews.

The writer of the book of Luke contradicts that of Matthew more pointedly than John does; for he ſays expreſsly, that the meeting was *in Jeruſalem* the evening of the ſame day that he (Chriſt) roſe, and that the *eleven* were *there*. See Luke, chap. xxiv. ver. 13, 33.

Now it is not poſſible, unleſs we admit thoſe ſuppoſed diſciples the right of wilful lying, that the writers of thoſe books could be any

of the eleven perſons called diſciples; for if, according to Matthew, the eleven went into Galilee to meet Jeſus in a mountain, by his own appointment, on the ſame day that he is ſaid to have riſen, Luke and John muſt have been two of that eleven; yet the writer of Luke ſays expreſsly, and John implies as much, that the meeting was that ſame day, in a houſe in Jeruſalem, and on the other hand, if, according to Luke and John, the *eleven* were aſſembled in a houſe in Jeruſalem, Matthew muſt have been one of that eleven; yet Matthew ſays, the meeting was in a mountain in Galilee, and conſequently the evidence given in thoſe books deſtroys each other.

The writer of the book of Mark ſays nothing about any meeting in Galilee; but he ſays, chap. xvi. ver. 12, that Chriſt, after his reſurrection, appeared in *another form* to two of them as they walked into the country, and that theſe two told it to the reſidue, who would not believe them. Luke alſo tells a ſtory, in which he keeps Chriſt employed the whole day of this pretended reſurrection, until the evening, and which totally invalidates the account of going to the mountain in Galilee. He ſays, that two of them, without ſaying which two, went that *ſame day* to a village called Emmaus, threeſcore furlongs (ſeven miles and an half) from Jeruſalem, and that Chriſt in diſguiſe went with them, and ſtaid with them unto the evening, and ſupped with them, and then vaniſhed out of their ſight, and re-appeared that ſame evening at the meeting of the eleven in Jeruſalem.

This is the contradictory manner in which the evidence of this pretended re-appearance of Chriſt is ſtated; the only point in which the writers agree, is the ſkulking privacy of that re-appearance; for whether it was in the receſs of a mountain in Galilee, or in a ſhut-up houſe in Jeruſalem, it was ſtill ſkulking. To what cauſe then are we to aſſign this ſkulking? On the one hand it is directly repugnant to the ſuppoſed or pretended end, that of convincing the world that Chriſt was riſen; and on the other hand, to have aſſerted the publicity of it, would have expoſed the writers of thoſe books to public detection; and therefore they have been under the neceſſity of making it a private affair.

As to the account of Chriſt being ſeen by more than five hundred hundred at once, it is Paul only who ſays it, and not the five hundred who ſay it for themſelves. It is therefore the teſtimony but of one man, and that too of a man who did not, according to the ſame account, believe a word of the matter himſelf, at the time it is ſaid to have happened. His evidence, ſuppoſing him to have been the writer

of the 15th chapter of Corinthians, where this account is given, is like that of a man, who comes into a court of juſtice to ſwear, that what he had ſworn before is falſe. A man may often ſee reaſon, and he has too always the right of changing his opinion; but this liberty does not extend to matters of fact.

I now come to the laſt ſcene, that of the aſcenſion into heaven. Here all fear of the Jews, and of every thing elſe, muſt neceſſarily have been out of the queſtion; it was that which, if true, was to ſeal the whole; and upon which the reality of the future miſſion of the diſciples was to reſt for proof. Words, whether declarations, or promiſes that paſſed in private, either in the receſs of a mountain in Galilee, or in a ſhut-up houſe in Jeruſalem, even ſuppoſing them to have been ſpoken, could not be evidence in public; it was therefore neceſſary that this laſt ſcene ſhould preclude the poſſibility of denial and diſpute; and that it ſhould be, as I have ſtated in the former part of the *Age of Reaſon*, as public and as viſible, as the ſun at noon-day; at leaſt, it ought to have been as public as the crucifixion is reported to have been. But to come to the point.——

In the firſt place, the writer of the book of Matthew does not ſay a ſyllable about it; neither does the writer of the book of John. This being the caſe, is it poſſible to ſuppoſe, that thoſe writers, who affect to be even minute in other matters, would have been ſilent upon this, had it been true? The writer of the book of Mark paſſes it off in a careleſs, ſlovenly manner, with a ſingle daſh of the pen; as if he was tired of romancing, or aſhamed of the ſtory. So alſo does the writer of Luke. And even between theſe two there is not an apparent agreement as to the place where this final parting is ſaid to have been.

The book of Mark ſays, that Chriſt appeared to the eleven, as they ſat at meat; alluding to the meeting of the eleven at Jeruſalem: he then ſtates the converſation, that he ſays paſſed at that meeting; and immediately after ſays, (as a ſchool-boy would finiſh a dull ſtory,) "*So then*, after the Lord had ſpoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and ſat on the right hand of God. But the writer of Luke ſays, that the aſcenſion was from Bethany; that *he* (Chriſt) *led them out as far as Bethany, and was parted from them there, and was carried up into heaven.* So alſo was Mahomet; and as to Moſes, the *apoſtle* Jude ſays, ver. 9, *That Michael and the Devil diſputed about his body.* While we believe ſuch fables as theſe, or either of them, we believe unworthily of the Almighty.

I have now gone through the examination of the four books aſcribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; and when it is conſidered that

the whole ſpace of time, from the crucifixion to what is called the aſcenſion, is but a few days, apparently not more than three or four, and that all the circumſtances are reported to have happened nearly about the ſame ſpot, Jeruſalem, it is, I believe, impoſſible to find, in any ſtory upon record, ſo many, and ſuch glaring abſurdities, contradictions, and falſhoods, as are in thoſe books. They are more numerous and ſtriking, than I had any expectation of finding when I began this examination, and far more ſo than I had any idea of, when I wrote the former part of the *Age of Reaſon*. I had then neither Bible nor Teſtament to refer to, nor could I procure any. My own ſituation, even as to exiſtence, was becoming every day more precarious; and as I was willing to leave ſomething behind me upon the ſubject, I was obliged to be quick and conciſe. The quotations I then made, were from memory only, but they are correct; and the opinions I have advanced in that work, are the effect of the moſt clear and long eſtabliſhed conviction,—that the Bible and Teſtament are impoſitions upon the world;—that the fall of man, the account of Jeſus Chriſt being the Son of God, and of his dying to appeaſe the wrath of God, and of ſalvation by that ſtrange means, are all fabulous inventions, diſhonourable to the wiſdom and power of the Almighty;—that the only true religion is deiſm, by which I then meant and now mean the belief of one God, and an imitation of his moral character, or the practice of what are called moral virtues;—and that it was upon this only (ſo far as religion is concerned) that I reſted all my hopes of happineſs hereafter. So ſay I now—and ſo help me God.

But to return to the ſubject.—Though it is impoſſible, at this diſtance of time, to aſcertain as a fact, who were the writers of thoſe four books (and this alone is ſufficient to hold them in doubt, and where we doubt we do not believe), it is not difficult to aſcertain negatively, that they were not written by the perſons to whom they are aſcribed. The contradictions in thoſe books demonſtrate two things.

Firſt, that the writers cannot have been eye-witneſſes and ear-witneſſes of the matters they relate, or they would have related them without thoſe contradictions; and conſequently that the books have not been written by the perſons called apoſtles, who are ſuppoſed to have been witneſſes of this kind.

Secondly, that the writers, whoever they were, have not acted in concerted impoſitions; but each writer, ſeparately and individually for himſelf, and without the knowledge of the other.

The ſame evidence that applies to prove the one, applies equally to

prove both theſe caſes; that is, that the books were not written by the men called apoſtles, and alſo that they are not a concerted impoſition. As to inſpiration, it is altogether out of the queſtion; we may as well attempt to unite truth and falſhood, as inſpiration and contradiction.

If four men are eye-witneſſes and ear-wineſſes to a ſcene, they will without any concert among them, agree as to the time and place, when and where that ſcene happened. Their individual knowledge of the *thing*, each one knowing it for himſelf, renders concert totally unneceſſary; the one will not ſay it was in a mountain in the country, and the other at a houſe in town; the one will not ſay it was at ſunriſe, and the other that it was dark. For in whatever place it was, and at whatever time it was, they know it equally alike.

And on the other hand, if four men concert a ſtory, they will make their ſeparate relations of that ſtory agree and corroborate each other to ſupport the whole. *That* concert ſupplies the want of fact in the one caſe, as the knowledge of the fact ſupercedes, in the other caſe, the neceſſity of concert. The ſame contradictions, therefore, that prove there has been no concert, prove alſo, that the reporters had no knowledge of the fact (or rather of that which they relate as a fact), and detect alſo the falſhood of their reports. Thoſe books, therefore, have neither been written by the men called apoſtles, nor by impoſtors in concert. How then have they been written?

I am not one of thoſe who are fond of believing there is much of that which is called wilful lying, or lying originally, except in the caſe of men ſetting up to be prophets, as in the Old Teſtament; for propheſying is lying profeſſionally. In almoſt all other caſes, it is not difficult to diſcover the progreſs, by which even ſimple ſuppoſition, with the aid of credulity, will in time grow into a lie, and at laſt be told as a fact; and whenever we find a charitable reaſon for a thing of this kind, we ought not to indulge a ſevere one.

The ſtory of Jeſus Chriſt appearing after he was dead, is the ſtory of an apparition; ſuch as timid imagination can always create in viſion, and credulity believe. Stories of this kind had been told of the aſſaſſination of Julius Cæſar not many years before, and they generally have their origin in violent deaths, or in execution of innocent perſons. In caſes of this kind, compaſſion lends it's aid, and benevolently ſtretches the ſtory. It goes on a little and a little farther, till it becomes a *moſt certain truth*. Once ſtart a ghoſt, and credulity fills up the hiſtory of it's life, and aſſigns the cauſe of it's appearance; one tells it one way, another another way, till there are as many

ſtories about the ghoſt, and about the proprietor of the ghoſt, as there are about Jeſus Chriſt in theſe four books.

The ſtory of the appearance of Jeſus Chriſt is told with that ſtrange mixture of the natural and the impoſſible, that diſtinguiſhes a legendary tale from fact. He is repreſented as ſuddenly coming in, and going out when the doors were ſhut, and of vaniſhing out of ſight, and appearing again, as one would conceive of an unſubſtantial viſion; then again he is hungry, ſits down to meat, and eats his ſupper. But as thoſe who tell ſtories of this kind, never provide for all the caſes, ſo it is here: they have told us, that when he aroſe, he left his grave clothes behind him; but they have forgotten to provide other clothes for him to appear in afterwards, or to tell us what he did with them, when he aſcended; whether he ſtript all off, or went up clothes and all. In the caſe of Elijah, they have been careful enough to make him throw down his mantle; how it happened not to be burnt in the chariot of fire, *they* alſo have not told us. But as imagination ſupplies all deficiencies of this kind, we may ſuppoſe, if we pleaſe, that it was made of ſalamander's wool.

Thoſe who are not much acquainted with eccleſiaſtical hiſtory may ſuppoſe, that the book called the New Teſtament has exiſted ever ſince the time of Jeſus Chriſt, as they ſuppoſe that the books aſcribed to Moſes, have exiſted ever ſince the time of Moſes. But the fact is hiſtorically otherwiſe; there was no ſuch book as the New Teſtament, till more than three hundred years after the time that Chriſt is ſaid to have lived.

At what time the books aſcribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, began to appear, is altogether a matter of uncertainty. There is not the leaſt ſhadow of evidence of who the perſons were that wrote them; and they might as well have been called by the names of any other ſuppoſed apoſtles, as by the names they are now called. The originals are not in the poſſeſſion of any Chriſtian church exiſting, any more than the two tables of ſtones written on, as they pretend, by the finger of God, upon Mount Sinai, and given to Moſes, are in the poſſeſſion of the Jews. And even if they were, there is no poſſibility of proving the hand-writing in either caſe. At the time thoſe four books were written, there was no printing, and conſequently there could be no publication, otherwiſe than by written copies, which any man might make, or alter at pleaſure, and call them originals. Can we ſuppoſe it is conſiſtent with the wiſdom of the Almighty, to commit himſelf and his will to man upon ſuch precarious means as

theſe; or that it is conſiſtent we ſhould pin our faith upon ſuch uncertainty? We cannot make, nor alter, nor even imitate ſo much as a blade of graſs, that he has made, and yet we can make or alter *words of God*, as eaſily as words of man.*

About three hundred and fifty years after the time that Chriſt is ſaid to have lived, ſeveral writings of the kind I am ſpeaking of, were ſcattered in the hands of divers individuals; and as the church had begun to form itſelf into a hierarchy, or church government with temporal powers, it ſet itſelf about collecting them into a code, as we now ſee them, called the *New Teſtament*. They decided by vote, as I have before ſaid in the former part of the *Age of Reaſon*, which of thoſe writings, out of the collection they had made, ſhould be the *word of God*, and which ſhould not. The rabbins of the Jews, had decided, by vote, upon the books of the Bible before.

As the object of the church was, as is the caſe in all national eſtabliſhments of churches, power and revenue, and terror the means it uſed; it is conſiſtent to ſuppoſe, that the moſt miraculous and wonderful of the writings they had collected, ſtood the beſt chance of being voted. And as to the authenticity of the books, the *vote ſtands in the place of it*; for it can be traced no higher.

Diſputes, however, ran high among the people then calling themſelves Chriſtians; not only as to points of doctrine, but as to the authenticity of the books. In the conteſt between the perſons called St. Auguſtine, and Fauſte, about the year 400, the latter ſays, "the books called the Evangeliſts, have been compoſed long after the times of the apoſtles, by ſome obſcure men, who fearing that the world would not give credit to their relation of matters, of which they

* *The former part of the* Age of Reaſon *has not been publiſhed two years, and there is already an expreſſion in it, that is not mine. The expreſſion is,* The book of Luke was carried by a majority of one vote only. *It may be true, but it is not I that have ſaid it. Some perſon, who might know of that circumſtance, has added it in a note at the bottom of the page of ſome of the editions, printed either in England, or in America; and the printers, after that, have erected it into the body of the work, and made me the author of it. If this has happened within ſuch a ſhort ſpace of time, notwithſtanding the aid of printing, which prevents the alteration of copies individually; what may not have happened in a much greater length of time, when there was no printing, and when any man who could write, could make a written copy, and call it an original, by Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John?*

could not be informed, have publiſhed them under the names of the apoſtles; and which are ſo full of ſottiſhneſs and diſcordant relations, that there is neither agreement, nor connection between them."

And in another place, addreſſing himſelf to the advocates of thoſe books, as being the word of God, he ſays, "It is thus that your predeceſſors have inſerted, in the ſcriptures of our Lord, many things, which, though they carry his name, agree not with his doctrine. This is not ſurpriſing, *ſince that we have often proved*, that theſe things have not been written by himſelf nor by his apoſtles, but that for the greateſt part they are founded upon *tales*, upon *vague reports*, and put together by I know not what, half-Jews, with but little agreement between them; and which they have nevertheleſs publiſhed under the names of the apoſtles of our Lord, and have thus attributed to them their own *errors and their lies*."*

The reader will ſee by theſe extracts that the authenticity of the books of the New Teſtament was denied, and the books treated as tales, forgeries, and lies, at the time they were voted to be the word of God. But the intereſt of the church, with the aſſiſtance of the faggot, bore down the oppoſition, and at laſt oppreſſed all inveſtigation. Miracles followed upon miracles, if we will believe them, and men were taught to ſay they believed, whether they believed or not. But (by way of throwing in a thought) the French revolution has excommunicated the church from the power of working miracles; ſhe has not been able, with the aſſiſtance of all her ſaints, to work *one* miracle ſince the revolution began: and as ſhe never ſtood in greater need than now, we may, without the aid of divination, conclude, that all her former miracles are tricks and lies.†

* *I have taken theſe two extracts from Boulanger's Life of Paul, written in French. Boulanger has quoted them from the writings of Auguſtine againſt Fauſte, to which he refers.*

† *Boulanger, in his Life of St. Paul, has collected from the eccleſiaſtical hiſtories, and the writings of the fathers, as they are called, ſeveral matters, which ſhew the opinions that prevailed among the different ſects of Chriſtians, at the time the Teſtament, as we now ſee it, was voted to be the word of God. The following extracts are from the ſecond chapter of that work.*

"*The Marcioniſts (a Chriſtian ſect) aſſured that the evangeliſts were filled with falſities. The Manichæans, who formed a very numerous ſect at the commencement of Chriſtianity*, rejected as falſe all the New Teſtament; *and ſhewed other writings quite different, that they gave for authentic.*

When we conſider the lapſe of more than three hundred years intervening between the time that Chriſt is ſaid to have lived, and the time the New Teſtament was formed into a book, we muſt ſee, even without the aſſiſtance of hiſtorical evidence, the exceeding uncertainty there is of it's authenticity. The authenticity of the book of Homer, ſo far as regards the authorſhip, is much better eſtabliſhed than that of the New Teſtament, though Homer is a thouſand years the more ancient. It was only an exceeding good poet that could have written the book of Homer, and therefore few men only could have attempted it; and a man capable of doing it, would not have thrown away his own fame, by giving it to another. In like manner, there were but few that could have compoſed Euclid's Elements, becauſe none but an exceeding good geometrician could have been the author of that work.

But with reſpect to the books of the New Teſtament, particularly ſuch parts as tell us of the reſurrection and aſcenſion of Chriſt, any perſon who could tell a ſtory of an apparition, or of a *man's walking*, could have made ſuch books; for the ſtory is moſt wretchedly told. The chance, therefore, of forgery in the Teſtament, is millions to one greater than in the caſe of Homer or Euclid. Of the numerous prieſts or parſons of the preſent day, biſhops, and all, every one of them can make a ſermon, or tranſlate a ſcrap of Latin, eſpecially if it has been tranſlated a thouſand times before; but is there any amongſt them that can write poetry like Homer, or ſcience like Euclid? the ſum total of a parſon's learning, with very few exceptions, is a b,

The Corinthians, like the Marcioniſts, admitted not the Acts of the Apoſtles. The Eucratics and the Sevenians adopted neither the Acts, nor the Epiſtles of Paul. Chryſoſtome, in a homily, which he made upon the Acts of the Apoſtles, ſays, that in his time, about the year 400, *many people knew nothing either of the author, or of the book. St. Irene, who lived before that time, reports that the Valentinians, like ſeveral other ſects of the Chriſtians, accuſed the ſcriptures of being filled with errors, imperfections, and contradictions. The Ebioniſts, or Nazarines, who were the firſt Chriſtians, rejected all the Epiſtles of Paul, and regarded him as an impoſtor. They report, among other things, that he was originally a pagan, that he came to Jeruſalem, where he lived ſome time; and that having a mind to marry the daughter of the high-prieſt, he cauſed himſelf to be circumciſed; but that not being able to obtain her, he quarrelled with the Jews, and wrote againſt circumciſion, and againſt the obſervation of the ſabbath, and againſt all legal ordinances.*

ab, and hic, hæc, hoc; and their knowledge of ſcience is, three times one is three; and this is more than ſufficient to have enabled them, had they lived at the time, to have written all the books of the New Teſtament.

As the opportunities of forgery were greater, ſo alſo was the inducement. A man could gain no advantage by writing under the name of Homer or Euclid; if he could write equal to them, it would be better that he wrote under his own name; if inferior, he could not ſucceed. Pride would prevent the former, and impoſſibility the latter. But with reſpect to ſuch books as compoſe the New Teſtament, all the inducements were on the ſide of forgery. The beſt imagined hiſtory that could have been made at the diſtance of two or three hundred years after the time, could not have paſſed for an original under the name of the real writer; the whole chance of ſucceſs lay in forgery; for the church wanted pretence for it's new doctrine, and truth and talents were out of the queſtion.

But as it is not uncommon (as before obſerved) to relate ſtories of perſons *walking* after they are dead, and of ghoſts and apparitions of ſuch as have fallen by ſome violent or extraordinary means; and as the people of that day were in the habit of believing ſuch things, and of the appearance of angels, and alſo of devils, and of their getting into people's inſides, and ſhaking them like the fit of an ague, and of their being caſt out again as if by an emetic; (Mary Magdalene, the book of Mark tells us, had brought up, or been brought to bed of, ſeven devils;) it was nothing extraordinary that ſome ſtory of this kind ſhould get abroad of the perſon called Jeſus Chriſt, and afterwards become the foundation of the four books aſcribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Each writer told the tale as he heard it, or thereabout, and gave to his book the name of the ſaint, or the apoſtle, whom tradition had given as the eye-witneſs. It is only upon this ground that the contradictions in thoſe books can be accounted for; and if this be not the caſe, they are downright impoſitions, lies, and forgeries, without even the apology of credulity.

That they have been written by a ſort of half Jews, as the foregoing quotations mention, is diſcernible enough. The frequent references made to that chief aſſaſſin and impoſtor, Moſes, and to the men called prophets, eſtabliſhes this point; and on the other hand, the church has complimented the fraud, by admitting the Bible and the Teſtament to reply to each other. Between the Chriſtian-Jew, and the Chriſtian-Gentile, the thing called a prophecy, and the thing propheſied of; the type, and the thing typified; the ſign, and the thing

ſignified; have been induſtriouſly rummaged up, and fitted together like old locks and picklock-keys. The ſtory, fooliſhly enough told, of Eve and the ſerpent, and naturally enough as to the enmity between men and ſerpents; (for the ſerpent always bites about the *heel*, becauſe it cannot reach higher; and the man always knocks the ſerpent about the *head*, as the moſt effectual way to prevent it's biting;)* this fooliſh ſtory, I ſay, has been made into a prophecy, a type, and a promiſe to begin with; and the lying impoſition of Iſaiah to Ahaz, *That a virgin ſhould conceive and bear a ſon*, as a ſign that Ahaz ſhould conquer, when the event was, that he was defeated (as already noticed in the obſervations on the book of Iſaiah,) has been perverted, and made to ſerve as a winder-up.

Jonah and the whale are alſo made into ſigns and types. Jonah is Jeſus, and the whale is the grave; for it is ſaid, (and they have made Chriſt to ſay it of himſelf,) Matt. chap. xii. ver. 40, "For as Jonah was *three days* and *three nights* in the whale's belly, ſo ſhall the ſon of man be *three days* and *three nights* in the heart of the earth." But it happens awkwardly enough that Chriſt, according to their own account, was but two nights and one day in the grave; about 36 hours inſtead of 72; that is, the Friday night, the Saturday, and the Saturday night; for he was up on the Sunday morning, by ſun-riſe or before. But as this fits quite as well as the *bite* and the *kick* in Geneſis, and the *virgin*, and her *ſon* in Iſaiah, it will paſs in the lump of *orthodox* things. Thus much for the hiſtorical part of the Teſtament, and its evidences.

THE EPISTLES OF PAUL.

The Epiſtles aſcribed to Paul, being fourteen in number, almoſt fill up the remaining part of the Teſtament. Whether thoſe epiſtles were written by the perſon to whom they are are aſcribed is a matter of no great importance, ſince that writer, whoever he was, attempts to prove his doctrine by argument. He does not pretend to have been witneſs to any of the ſcenes told of the reſurrection and the aſcenſion, and he declares that he had not believed them.

The ſtory of his being ſtruck to the ground as he was journeying to Damaſcus, has nothing in it miraculous or extraordinary; he eſcaped with life, and that is more than many others have done who have been ſtruck with lightning: and that he ſhould loſe his ſight

* "*It ſhall bruiſe thy* head *and thou ſhall bruiſe his* heel," Geneſis, chap. iii. ver. 15.

for three days, and be unable to eat or drink during that time, is nothing more than is common in ſuch conditions. His companions that were with him appear not to have ſuffered in the ſame manner, for they were well enough to lead him the remainder of the journey; neither did they pretend to have ſeen any viſion.

The character of the perſon called Paul, according to the accounts given of him, has in it a great deal of violence and fanaticiſm; he had perſecuted with as much heat as he preached afterwards; the ſtroke he had received had changed his thinking, without altering his conſtitution; and either as a Jew or a Chriſtian he was the ſame zealot. Such men are never good moral evidences of any doctrine they preach. They are always in extremes, as well of action as of belief.

The doctrine he ſets out to prove by argument is the reſurrection of the ſame body, and he advances this as an evidence of immortality. But ſo much will men differ in their manner of thinking, and in the concluſions they draw from the ſame premiſes, that this doctrine of the reſurrection of the ſame body, ſo far from being an evidence of immortality, appears to me to furniſh an evidence againſt it: for, if I have already died in this body, and am raiſed again in the ſame body in which I have died, it is preſumptive evidence that I ſhall die again. That reſurrection no more ſecures me againſt the repetition of dying, than an ague fit, when paſt, ſecures me againſt another. To believe therefore in immortality, I muſt have a more elevated idea, than is contained in the gloomy doctrine of the reſurrection.

Beſides, as a matter of choice, as well as of hope, I had rather have a better body and a more convenient form, than the preſent. Every animal in the creation excels us in ſomething. The winged inſects, without mentioning doves or eagles, can paſs over more ſpace, and with greater eaſe, in a few minutes, than man can in an hour. The glide of the ſmalleſt fiſh, in proportion to it's bulk, exceeds us in motion, almoſt beyond compariſon, and without wearineſs. Even the ſluggiſh ſnail can aſcend from the bottom of a dungeon, where man, by the want of that ability, would periſh; and a ſpider can launch itſelf from the top, as playful amuſement. The perſonal powers of man are ſo limited, and his heavy frame ſo little conſtructed to extenſive enjoyment, that there is nothing to induce us to wiſh the opinion of Paul to be true. It is too little for the magnitude of the ſcene; too mean for the ſublimity of the ſubject.

But all other arguments apart, the *conſciouſneſs of exiſtence* is the only conceivable idea that we can have of another life; and the continuance of that conſciouſneſs is immortality. The conſciouſneſs of

exiſtence, or the knowing that we exiſt, is not neceſſarily confined to the ſame form, nor to the ſame matter, even in this life.

We have not in all caſes the ſame form, nor in any caſe the ſame matter that compoſed our bodies twenty or thirty years ago; and yet we are conſcious of being the ſame perſons. Even legs and arms, which make up almoſt half the human frame, are not neceſſary to the conſciouſneſs of exiſtence. They may be loſt, or taken away, and the full conſciouſneſs of exiſtence remain; and were their place ſupplied by wings or other appendages, we cannot conceive that it could alter our conſciouſneſs of exiſtence. In ſhort, we know not how much, or rather how little, of our compoſition it is, and how exquiſitely fine that little is, that creates in us the conſciouſneſs of exiſtence; and all beyond that is like the pulp of a peach, diſtinct and ſeparate from the vegetative ſpeck in the kernel.

Who can ſay what exceeding fine action of fine matter it is, that produces a thought in what we call the mind? And yet that thought, when produced, as I now produce the thought I am writing, is capable of becoming immortal, and is the only production of men that has that capacity.

Statues of braſs or marble will periſh; and ſtatues made in imitation of them are not the ſame ſtatues, nor the ſame workmanſhip, any more than the copy of a picture is the ſame picture. But print and reprint a thought a thouſand times over, and with materials of any kind, carve it on wood, or engrave it on ſtone, the thought is eternally and identically the ſame thought in every caſe. It has a capacity of unimpaired exiſtence, unaffected by change of matter, and is eſſentially diſtinct, and of a nature different from every thing elſe that we know of, or can conceive. If then the thing produced has in itſelf, a capacity of being immortal, it is more than a token that the power that produced it, which is the ſelf-ſame thing as conſciouſneſs of exiſtence, can be immortal alſo; and that independently of the matter it was firſt connected with, as the thought is of the printing, or writing, it firſt appeared in. The one idea is not more difficult to believe than the other; and we can ſee that one is true.

That the conſciouſneſs of exiſtence is not dependent on the ſame form, or the ſame matter, is demonſtrated to our ſenſes in the works of the creation, ſo far as our ſenſes are capable of receiving that demonſtration. A very numerous part of the animal creation preaches to us, far better than Paul, the belief of a life hereafter. Their little life reſembles an earth and a heaven, a preſent and a future ſtate; and comprifes, if it may be ſo expreſſed, immortality in miniature.

The moſt beautiful parts of the creation, to our eyes, are the winged inſects; and they are not ſo originally. They acquire that form and that inimitable brilliancy by progreſſive changes. The ſlow and creeping caterpillar-worm of to-day, paſſes in a few days to a torpid figure and a ſtate reſembling death; and in the next change comes forth in all the miniature magnificence of life, a ſplendid butterfly. No reſemblance of the former creature remains; every thing is changed; all his powers are new, and life is to him another thing. We cannot conceive that the conſciouſneſs of exiſtence is not the ſame in this ſtate of the animal as before: why then muſt I believe that the reſurrection of the ſame body is neceſſary to continue to me the conſciouſneſs of exiſtence hereafter?

In the former part of the *Age of Reaſon* I have called the creation the true and only real word of God; and this inſtance, or this text, in the book of creation, not only ſhews to us that this thing may be ſo, but that it is ſo; and that the belief of a future ſtate is a *rational belief*, founded upon facts viſible on the creation; for it is not more difficult to believe that we ſhall exiſt hereafter in a better ſtate and form than at preſent, than that a worm ſhould become a butterfly, and quit the dunghill for the atmoſphere, if we did not know it as a fact.

As to the doubtful jargon aſcribed to Paul in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, which makes part of the burial-ſervice of ſome Chriſtians, it is as deſtitute of meaning as the tolling of the bell at the funeral. It explains nothing to the underſtanding; it illuſtrates nothing to the imagination; but leaves the reader to find any meaning if he can.

"All fleſh," ſays he, "is not the ſame fleſh. There is one fleſh of men, another of fiſhes, and another of birds." And what then? nothing. A cook could have ſaid as much. "There are alſo," ſays he, "bodies celeſtial, and bodies terreſtrial; the glory of the celeſtial is *one*, and the glory of the terreſtrial is *another*." And what then? nothing. And what is the difference? nothing that he has told. "There is," ſays he, "one glory of the ſun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the ſtars." And what then? nothing; except that he ſays that *one ſtar differeth from another ſtar in glory*, inſtead of diſtance; and he might as well have told us, that the moon did not ſhine as bright as the ſun. All this is nothing better than the jargon of a conjuror, who picks up phraſes he does not underſtand, to confound the credulous people who come to have their fortune told. Prieſts and conjurors are of the ſame trade.

Sometimes Paul affects to be a naturaliſt, and to prove his ſyſtem of reſurrection from the principles of vegetation. "*Thou fool,*" ſays he, "*that which thou ſoweſt is not quickened, except it die.*" To which one might reply in his own language, and ſay, Thou fool, Paul, that which thou ſoweſt is not quickened, except it die *not;* for the grain that dies in the ground, never does, nor can vegetate. The living grains only produce the next crop. But the metaphor, in point of view, is no ſimile. It is ſucceſſion and reſurrection.

The progreſs of an animal, from one ſtate of being to another, as from a worm to a butterfly, applies to the caſe; but this of the grain does not; and ſhews Paul to have been, what he ſays of others, *a fool.*

Whether the fourteen epiſtles aſcribed to Paul were written by him or not, is a matter of indifference; they are either argumentative or dogmatical; and as the argument is defective, and the dogmatical part is merely preſumptive, it ſignifies not who wrote them. And the ſame may be ſaid for the remaining parts of the Teſtament. It is not upon the Epiſtles, but upon what is called the Goſpel, contained in the four books aſcribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and upon the pretended prophecies, that the theory of the church, calling itſelf the Chriſtian church, is founded. The epiſtles are dependent upon thoſe, and muſt follow their fate; for if the ſtory of Jeſus Chriſt be fabulous, all reaſoning founded upon it, as a ſuppoſed truth, muſt fall with it.

We know, from hiſtory, that one of the principal leaders of this church, Athanaſius, lived at the time the New Teſtament was formed; and we know alſo, from the abſurd jargon he has left us, under the name of a creed, the character of the men who formed the New Teſtament;* and we know alſo from the ſame hiſtory, that the authenticity of the books, of which it is compoſed, was denied at the time. It is upon the vote of ſuch as Athanaſius, that the Teſtament was decreed to be the word of God, and nothing can preſent to us a more ſtrange idea, than that of decreeing the word of God by vote. Thoſe who reſt their faith upon ſuch authority, put man in the place of God, and have no true foundation for future happineſs. Credulity, however, is not a crime; but it becomes criminal by reſiſting conviction. It is ſtrangling in the womb of the conſcience the efforts it makes to aſcertain truth. We ſhould never force belief upon ourſelves in any thing.

* *Athanaſius died, according to the church chronology, in the year* 371.

I here close the subject on the Old Testament, and the New. The evidences I have produced, to prove them forgeries, is extracted from the books themselves, and acts, like a two-edged sword, either way. If the evidence be denied, the authenticity of the scripture is denied with it; for it is scripture-evidence; and if the evidence be admitted, the authenticity of the books is disproved. The contradictory impossibilities contained in the Old Testament, and the New, put them in the case of a man who swears *for* and *against*. Either evidence convicts him of perjury, and equally destroys reputation.

Should the Bible and Testament hereafter fall, it is not I that have been the occasion. I have done no more, than extract the evidence from the confused mass of matters with which it is mixed, and arrange that evidence in a point of light to be clearly seen, and easily comprehended: and having done this, I leave the reader to judge for himself, as I have judged for myself.

CONCLUSION.

In the former part of the *Age of Reason*, I have spoken of the three frauds, *mystery*, *miracle*, and *prophesy*: and as I have seen nothing in any of the answers to that work, that in the least affects what I have there said upon these subjects, I shall not encumber this second part with additions, that are not necessary.

I have spoken also in the same work upon what is called *revelation*, and have shewn the absurd misapplication of that term to the books of the Old Testament, and the New: for certainly revelation is out of the question in reciting any thing of which man has been the actor or the witness. That which a man has done or seen needs no revelation to tell him he has done it, or seen it, for he knows it already; nor to enable him to tell it, or to write it. It is ignorance, or imposition, to apply the term revelation in such cases; yet the Bible and Testament are classed under this fraudulent description of being all *revelation*.

Revelation then, so far as the term has relation between God and man, can only be applied to something which God reveals of his *will* to man; but though the power of the Almighty, to make such a communication, is necessarily admitted, because to that power all things are possible, yet, the thing so revealed (if any thing ever was revealed, and which, by the bye, it is impossible to prove) is revelation to the person *only to whom it is made*. His account of it to another is not revelation; and whoever puts faith in that account, puts it in the man from whom the account comes; and that man may have been

deceived, or may have dreamed it; or he may be an impoſtor, and may lie. There is no poſſible criterion whereby to judge of the truth of what he tells; for even the morality of it would be no proof of revelation. In all ſuch caſes, the proper anſwer would be, "*When it is revealed to me, I will believe it to be revelation; but it is not, and cannot be incumbent upon me to believe it to be revelation before; neither is it proper that I ſhould take the word of man as the word of God, and put man in the place of God.*" This is the manner in which I have ſpoken of revelation in the former part of the *Age of Reaſon*; and which, while it reverentially admits revelation as a poſſible thing, becauſe, as before ſaid, to the Almighty all things are poſſible, it prevents the impoſition of one man upon another, and precludes the wicked uſe of pretended revelation.

But though, ſpeaking for myſelf, I thus admit the poſſibility of revelation; I totally diſbelieve, that the Almighty ever did communicate any thing to man, by any mode of ſpeech in any language, or by any kind of viſion, or appearance, or by any means which our ſenſes are capable of receiving, otherwiſe than by the univerſal diſplay of himſelf in the works of creation, and by that repugnance we feel in ourſelves to bad actions, and diſpoſition to good ones.

The moſt deteſtable wickedneſs, the moſt horrid cruelties, and the greateſt miſeries, that have afflicted the human race, have had their origin in this thing called revelation, or revealed religion. It has been the moſt diſhonourable belief againſt the character of the Divinity, and the moſt deſtructive to morality, and the peace and happineſs of man, that ever was propagated ſince man began to exiſt. It is better, far better, that we admitted, if it were poſſible, a thouſand devils to roam at large, and to preach publicly the doctrine of devils, if there were any ſuch, than that we permitted one ſuch impoſtor or monſter as Moſes, Joſhua, Samuel, and the Bible-prophets to come with the pretended word of God in his mouth, and have credit among us.

Whence aroſe all the horrid aſſaſſinations of whole nations, of men, women, and infants, with which the Bible is filled, and the bloody perſecutions, and tortures unto death, and religious wars, that ſince that time have laid Europe in blood and aſhes; whence aroſe they, but from this impious thing called revealed religion, and this monſtrous belief, that God has ſpoken to man? The lies of the Bible have been the cauſe of the one, and the lies of the Teſtament the other.

Some Chriſtians pretend that Chriſtianity was not eſtabliſhed by the ſword; but of what period of time do they ſpeak? It was impoſſible that *twelve* men ſhould *begin* with the ſword; they had not

the power; but no sooner were the professors of Christianity sufficiently powerful to employ the sword, than they did so, and the stake and the faggot too; and Mahomet could not do it sooner. By the same spirit that Peter cut off the ear of the high priest's servant (if the story be true), he would cut off his head, and the head of his master, had he been able. Besides this, Christianity grounds itself originally upon the Bible, and the Bible was established altogether by the sword, and that in the worst use of it; not to terrify, but to extirpate. The Jews made no converts; butchered all. The Bible is the fire of the Testament, and both are called the *word of God*. The Christians read both books; the ministers preach from both books; and this thing called Christianity is made up of both. It is then false to say, that Christianity was not established by the sword.

The only sect that has not persecuted are the quakers; and the only reason that can be given for it, is, that they are rather Deists than Christians. They do not believe much about Jesus Christ, and they call the scriptures a dead letter. Had they called them by a worse name, they had been nearer the truth.

It is incumbent on every man who reverences the character of the Creator, and who wishes to lessen the catalogue of artificial miseries, and remove the cause that has sown persecutions thick among mankind, to expel all ideas of revealed religion as a dangerous heresy, and an impious fraud. What is it that we have learned from this pretended thing called revealed religion?—nothing that is useful to man, and every thing that is dishonourable to his Maker. What is it the Bible teaches us?—rapine, cruelty, and murder. What is it the Testament teaches us?—to believe that the Almighty committed debauchery with a woman, engaged to be married; and the belief of this debauchery is called faith.

As to the fragments of morality that are irregularly and thinly scattered in those books, they make no part of this pretended thing, revealed religion. They are the natural dictates of conscience, and the bonds by which society is held together, and without which, it cannot exist; and are nearly the same in all religions, and in all societies. The Testament teaches nothing new upon this subject; and where it attempts to exceed, it becomes mean, and ridiculous. The doctrine of not retaliating injuries is much better expressed in Proverbs, which is a collection as well from the Gentiles, as the Jews, than it is in the Testament. It is there said, Proverbs xxv. ver. 21, "*If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to*

*drink :"** but when it is faid, as in the Teftament, "*If a man fmite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other alfo ;*" it is affaffinating the dignity of forbearance, and finking man into a *fpaniel.*

Loving enemies is another dogma of feigned morality, and has befides no meaning. It is incumbent on man, as a moraliſt, that he does not revenge an injury ; and it is equally as good in a political fenfe, for there is no end to retaliation ; each retaliates on the other, and calls it juſtice: but to love in proportion to the injury, if it could be done, would be to offer a premium for a crime. Beſides, the word *enemies* is too vague and general to be uſed in a moral maxim, which ought always to be clear and defined, like a proverb. If a man be the enemy of another from miſtake and prejudice, as in the caſe of religious opinions, and ſometimes in politics, that man is different to an enemy at heart, with a criminal intention ; and it is incumbent upon us, and it contributes alſo to our own tranquility, that we put the beſt conſtruction upon a thing that it will bear. But even this erroneous motive in him makes no motive for love on the other part ; and to ſay that we can love voluntarily, and without a motive, is morally and phyſically impoſſible.

Morality is injured by preſcribing to it duties, that, in the firſt place, are impoſſible to be performed ; and, if they could be, would be productive of evil: or, as before ſaid, be premiums for crime. The maxim *of doing as we would be done unto* do s not include this ſtrange doctrine of loving enemies ; for no man expects to be loved himſelf for his crime, or for his enmity.

* *According to what is called Chriſt's ſermon on the mount in the book of Matthew, where, among ſome good things, a great deal of this feigned morality is introduced, it is there expreſsly ſaid, that the doctrine of forbearance, or of not retaliating injuries,* was not any part of the doctrine of the Jews; *and as this doctrine is found in Proverbs, it muſt, according to that ſtatement, have been copied from the Gentiles, from whom Chriſt learned it. Thoſe men, whom Jewiſh and Chriſtian idolators have abuſively called heathens, had much better and clearer ideas of juſtice and morality than are to be found in the Old Teſtament, ſo far as it is Jewiſh ; or in the New. The anſwer of Solon on the queſtion,* "*Which is the moſt perfect popular government,*" *has never been exceeded by any man ſince his time, as containing a maxim of political morality.* "That *ſays he,* where the leaſt injury done to the meaneſt individual, is conſidered as an inſult on the whole conſtitution." *Solon lived above 500 years before Chriſt.*

Thoſe who preach this doctrine of loving enemies, are in general the greateſt perſecutors, and they act conſiſtently in ſo doing; for the doctrine is hypocritical; and it is natural that hypocriſy ſhould act the reverſe of what it preaches. For my own part, I diſown the doctrine, and conſider it as a feigned or fabulous morality; yet the man does not exiſt that can ſay, I have perſecuted him, or any man, or any ſet of men, either in the American revolution, or in the French revolution; or that I have, in any caſe, returned evil for evil. But it is not incumbent on man to reward a bad action with a good one, or to return good for evil; and wherever it is done, it is a voluntary act, and not a duty. It is alſo abſurd to ſuppoſe, that ſuch doctrine can make any part of a revealed religion. We imitate the moral character of the Creator by forbearing with each other, for he forbears with all: but this doctrine would imply that he loved man, not in proportion as he was good, but as he was bad.

If we conſider the nature of our condition here, we muſt ſee there is no occaſion for ſuch a thing as *revealed religion*. What is it we want to know? Does not the creation, the univerſe we behold, preach to us the exiſtence of an Almighty power, that governs and regulates the whole? And is not the evidence that this creation holds out to our ſenſes infinitely ſtronger than any thing we can read in a book, that any impoſtor might make, and call the word of God? As for morality, the knowledge of it exiſts in every man's conſcience.

Here we are. The exiſtence of an Almighty power is ſufficiently demonſtrated to us, though we cannot conceive, as it is impoſſible we ſhould, the nature and manner of it's exiſtence. We cannot conceive how we came here ourſelves, and yet we know for a fact that we are here. We muſt know alſo, that the power that called us into being can, if he pleaſe, and when he pleaſes, call us to account for the manner in which we have lived here; and therefore, without ſeeking any other motive for the belief, it is rational to believe that he will, for we know beforehand that he can. The probability, or even poſſibility of the thing is all we ought to know; for if we knew it as a fact, we ſhould be the mere ſlaves of terror, our belief would have no merit, and our beſt actions no virtue.

Deiſm then teaches us, without the poſſibility of being deceived, all that is neceſſary and proper to be known. The creation is the Bible of the deiſt. He there reads, in the hand writing of the Creator himſelf, the certainty of his exiſtence; and all other Bibles and Teſtaments are to him forgeries. The probability that we may be called to account hereafter, will, to a reflecting mind, have the ia-

fluence of belief; for it is not our belief, or our diſbelief, that can make or unmake the fact. As this is the ſtate we are in, and which it is proper we ſhould be in, as free agents, it is the fool only, and not the philoſopher, or even the prudent men, who will live as if there were no God.

But the belief of a God is ſo weakened by being mixed with the ſtrange fable of the Chriſtian creed, and with the wild adventures related in the Bible, and the obſcurity and obſcene nonſenſe of the Teſtament, that the mind of man is bewildered as in a fog. Viewing all theſe things in a confuſed maſs, he confounds fact with fable; and as he cannot believe all, he feels a diſpoſition to reject all. But the belief of a God, is a belief diſtinct from all other things, and ought not to be confounded with any. The notion of a Trinity of Gods has enfeebled the belief of *one* God. A multiplication of beliefs acts as a diviſion of belief; and in proportion as any thing is divided, it is weakened.

Religion, by ſuch means, becomes a thing of form, inſtead of fact; a notion inſtead of principle; morality is baniſhed to make room for an imaginary thing, called faith, and this faith has it's origin in a ſuppoſed debauchery; a man is preached inſtead of God; an execution as an object of gratitude; the preachers daub themſelves with the blood, like a troop of aſſaſſins, and pretend to admire the brilliancy it gives them; they preach a humdrum ſermon on the merits of the execution; then praiſe Jeſus Chriſt for being executed, and condemn the Jews for doing it.

A man, by hearing all their nonſenſe lumped and preached together, confounds the God of the creation with the imagined God of Chriſtians, and lives as if there were none.

Of all the ſyſtems of religion that ever were invented, there is none more derogatory to the Amighty, more unedifying to man, more repugnant to reaſon, and more contradictory in itſelf than this thing called Chriſtianity. Too abſurd for belief, too impoſſible to convince, and too inconſiſtent for practice, it renders the heart torpid, or produces only atheiſts and fanatics. As an engine of power, it ſerves the purpoſe of deſpotiſm; and as a means of wealth, the avarice of prieſts; but ſo far as reſpects the good man in general, it leads to nothing here, or hereafter.

The only religion that has not been invented, and that has in it every evidence of divine originality, is pure and ſimple deiſm. It muſt have been the firſt, and will probably be the laſt that man believes. But pure and ſimple deiſm does not anſwer the purpoſe of deſpotic

government. They cannot lay hold of religion as an engine, but by mixing it with human inventions, and making their own authority a part; neither does it anſwer the avarice of prieſts, but by incorporating themſelves and their functions with it, and becoming, like the government, a party in the ſyſtem. It is this that forms the otherwiſe myſterious connection of church and ſtate; the church humane, and the ſtate tyrannic.

Were a man impreſſed as fully and as ſtrongly as he ought to be, with the belief of a God, his moral life would be regulated by the force of this belief; he would ſtand in awe of God, and of himſelf, and would not do the thing that could not be concealed from either. To give this belief the full opportunity of force, it is neceſſary that it acts alone. This is deiſm.

But when, according to the Chriſtian Trinitarian ſcheme, one part of God is repreſented by a dying man, and another part, called the Holy Ghoſt, by a flying pigeon, it is impoſſible that belief can attach itſelf to ſuch wild conceits.*

It has been the ſcheme of the Chriſtian church, and of all the other invented ſyſtems of religion, to hold man in ignorance of the Creator, as it is of government to hold him in ignorance of his rights. The ſyſtems of the one are as falſe as thoſe of the other, and are calculated for mutual ſupport, The ſtudy of theology, as it ſtands in Chriſtian churches, is the ſtudy of nothing; it is founded on nothing; it reſts on no principles; it proceeds by no authorities; it has no data; it can demonſtrate nothing; and admits of no concluſion. Not any thing can be ſtudied as a ſcience, without our being in poſſeſſion of the principles upon which it is founded; and as this is not the caſe with Chriſtan theology, it is therefore the ſtudy of nothing.

Inſtead then of ſtudying theology as is now done, out of the Bible and Teſtament, the meanings of which books are always controverted, and the authenticity of which is diſproved, it is neceſſary that we refer to the Bible of the creation. The principles we diſcover there, are eternal, and of divine origin: they are the foundation of all the ſcience that exiſts in the world, and muſt be the foundation of theology.

* *The book called the book of Matthew, ſays, chap. iii. ver.* 16, *that* the Holy Ghoſt deſcended in the ſhape of a Dove. *It might as well have ſaid a gooſe; the creatures are equally harmleſs, and the one is as much a nonſenſical lie as the other. The ſecond of Acts, ver.* 2, 3, *ſays, that it deſcended in a mighty* ruſhing wind, *in the ſhape of* cloven tongues; *perhaps it was cloven feet. Such abſurd ſtuff is fit only for tales of witches and wizards.*

We can know God only through his works. We cannot have a conception of any one attribute, but by following ſome principle that leads to it. We have only a confuſed idea of his power, if we have not the means of comprehending ſomething of it's immenſity. We can have no idea of his wiſdom, but by knowing the order and manner in which it acts. The principles of ſcience lead to this knowledge; for the Creator of man is the Creator of ſcience, and it is through that medium that man can ſee God, as it were, face to face.

Could a man be placed in a ſituation, and endowed with power of viſion, to behold at one view, and to contemplate deliberately, the ſtructure of the univerſe, to mark the movements of the ſeveral planets, the cauſe of their varying appearances, the unerring order in which they revolve, even to the remoteſt comet, their connection and dependence on each other, and to know the ſyſtem of laws, eſtabliſhed by the Creator, that governs and regulates the whole; he would then conceive far beyond what any church-theology can teach him, the power, the wiſdom, the vaſtneſs, the munificence of the Creator: he would then ſee, that all the knowledge man has of ſcience, and that all the mechanical arts, by which he renders his ſituation comfortable here, are derived from that ſource: his mind exalted by the ſcene, and convinced by the fact, would increaſe in gratitude, as it increaſed in knowledge: his religion or his worſhip would become united with his improvement as a man; any employment he followed, that had connection with the principles of the creation, as every thing of agriculture, of ſcience, and of the mechanical arts has, would teach him more of God, and of the gratitude he owes him, than any theological Chriſtian ſermon he now hears. Great objects inſpire great thoughts; great munificence excites great gratitude; but the groveling tales and doctrines of the Bible and the Teſtament are fit only to excite contempt.

Though man cannot arrive, at leaſt in this life, at the actual ſcene I have deſcribed, he can demonſtrate it; becauſe he has knowledge of the principles upon which the creation is conſtructed. We know that the greateſt works can be repreſented in model, and that the univerſe can be repreſented by the ſame means. The ſame principles by which we meaſure an inch, or an acre of ground, will meaſure to millions in extent. A circle of an inch diameter has the ſame geometrical properties as a circle that would circumſcribe the univerſe. The ſame properties of a triangle, that will demonſtrate upon paper the courſe of a ſhip, will do it on the ocean; and when applied to what are called the heavenly bodies, will aſcertain, to a minute, the time of an eclipſe, though thoſe bodies are millions of miles diſtant

from us. This knowledge is of divine origin; and it is from the Bible of the creation that man has learned it, and not from the ſtupid Bible of the church, that teaches man nothing.*

All the knowledge man has of ſcience and of machinery, by the aid of which his exiſtence is rendered comfortable upon earth, and without which he would be ſcarcely diſtinguiſhable in appearance and condition from a common animal, comes from the great machine and ſtructure of the univerſe. The conſtant and unwearied obſervations of our anceſtors, upon the movements and revolutions of the heavenly bodies in what are ſuppoſed to have been the early ages of the world, have brought this knowledge upon earth. It is not Moſes and the prophets, nor Jeſus Chriſt, nor his apoſtles, that have done it. The Almighty is the great mechanic of the creation, the firſt philoſopher, and original teacher of all ſcience. Let us then learn to reverence our maſter, and let us not forget the labours of our anceſtors.

Had we at this day no knowledge of machinery, and were it poſſible that man could have a view, as I have before deſcribed, of the ſtructure and machinery of the univerſe, he would ſoon conceive the idea of conſtructing ſome at leaſt of the mechanical works we now have; and the idea ſo conceived would progreſſively advance in practice. Or could a model of the univerſe, ſuch as is called an orrery, be preſented before him, and put in motion, his mind would arrive at the ſame idea. Such an object, and ſuch a ſubject, would, whilſt it improved him in knowledge uſeful to himſelf as a man and a

* *The Bible-makers have undertaken to give us, in the firſt chapter of Geneſis, an account of the creation; and in doing this they have demonſtrated nothing but their ignorance. They make there to have been three days and three nights, evenings and mornings, before there was any ſun; when it is the preſence or abſence of the ſun that is the cauſe of day and night, and his riſing and ſetting that of morning and evening. Beſides it is a puerile and pitiful idea, to ſuppoſe the Almighty to ſay,* Let there be Light. *It is the imperative manner of ſpeaking that a conjuror uſes, when he ſays to his cups and balls,* Preſto, be gone. *Longinus calls this expreſſion the* ſublime; *and by the ſame rule, the conjuror is ſublime too, for the manner of ſpeaking is expreſſively and grammatically the ſame. When authors and critics talk of the ſublime, they ſee not how nearly it borders on the ridiculous. The ſublime of the critic, like ſome part of Edmund Burke's* ſublime and beautiful, *is like a wind-mill juſt viſible in a fog, which imagination might diſtort into a flying mountain, or an archangel, or a flock of wild geeſe.*

member of ſociety, as well as entertaining, afford far better matter for impreſſing him with a knowledge of, and a belief in the Creator, and of the reverence and gratitude that man owes to him, than the ſtupid texts of the Bible and the Teſtament, from which, be the talents of the preacher what they may, only ſtupid ſermons can be preached. If man muſt preach, let him preach ſomething that is edifying, and from texts that are known to be true.

The Bible of the creation is inexhauſtible in texts. Every part of ſcience, whether connected with the geometry of the univerſe, with the ſyſtems of animal and vegetable life, or with the properties of inanimate matter, is a text as well for devotion as for philoſophy; for gratitude, as for human improvement. It will perhaps, be ſaid, that if ſuch a revolution in the ſyſtem of religion take place, every preacher ought to be a philoſopher. *Moſt certainly*, and every houſe of devotion a ſchool of ſcience.

It has been by wandering from the immutable laws of ſcience, and the right uſe of reaſon, and ſetting up an invented thing called revealed religion, that ſo many wild and blaſphemous conceits have been formed of the Almighty. The Jews have made him the aſſaſſin of the human ſpecies, to make room for the religion of the Jews. The Chriſtians have made him the murderer of himſelf, and the founder of a new religion to ſuperſede and expel the Jewiſh religion. And to find pretence and admiſſion for theſe things, they muſt have ſuppoſed his power or his wiſdom imperfect, or his will changeable; and the changeableneſs of his will is the imperfection of the judgment. The philoſopher knows that the laws of the Creator have never changed, with reſpect either to the principles of ſcience, or the properties of matter. Why then is it to be ſuppoſed they have changed with reſpect to men?

I here cloſe the ſubject. I have ſhewn, in all the foregoing parts of this work, that the Bible and Teſtament are impoſitions and forgeries; and I leave the evidence I have produced in proof of it, to be refuted, if any one can do it; and I leave the ideas that are ſuggeſted in the concluſion of the work, to reſt on the mind of the reader; certain as I am, that when opinions are free, either in matters of government or religion, truth will finally and powerfully prevail. #

adieu.

THE END.

Remember Thomas Paine you must meet at the Bar of God and give an account for every word contained in this blasphemous production —

LETTER

TO

GEORGE WASHINGTON,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

ON

AFFAIRS PUBLIC AND PRIVATE.

BY THOMAS PAINE,

AUTHOR OF THE WORKS ENTITLED, COMMON SENSE, RIGHTS OF MAN, AGE OF REASON, &c.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY BENJ. FRANKLIN BACHE, NO. 112 MARKET STREET.

1796.

[*Entered according to law.*]

THOMAS PAINE,

TO

GEORGE WASHINGTON,

Paris, July 30th, 1796.

AS cenſure is but awkwardly ſoftened by apology, I ſhall offer you no apology for this letter. The eventful criſis to which your double politics have conducted the affairs of your country requires an inveſtigation uncramped by ceremony.

There was a time when the fame of America, moral and political, ſtood fair and high in the world. The luſtre of her revolution extended itſelf to every individual; and to be a citizen of America gave a title to reſpect in Europe. Neither meanneſs nor ingratitude had then mingled itſelf into the compoſition of her character. Her reſiſtance to the attempted tyranny of England left her unſuſpected of the one, and her open acknowledgment of the aid ſhe received from

France precluded all ſuſpicion of the other. The Waſhington of politics had not then appeared.

At the time I left America (April 1787) the continental convention that formed the federal conſtitution was on the point of meeting. Since that time new ſchemes of politics and new diſtinctions of parties, have ariſen. The term *Antifederaliſt* has been applied to all thoſe who combated the defects of that conſtitution, or oppoſed the meaſures of your adminiſtration. It was only to the abſolute neceſſity of eſtabliſhing ſome federal authority, extending equally over all the States, that an inſtrument, ſo inconſiſtent as the preſent federal conſtitution is, obtained a ſuffrage. I would have voted for it myſelf, had I been in America, or even for a worſe rather than have had none; provided it contained the means of remedying its defects by the ſame appeal to the people by which it was to be eſtabliſhed. It is always better policy to leave removeable errors to expoſe themſelves, than to hazard too much in contending againſt them theoretically.

I have introduced thoſe obſervations, not only to mark the general difference between antifederaliſt and anti-conſtitutionaliſt, but to preclude the effect, and even the application, of the former of thoſe terms to myſelf. I declare myſelf oppoſed to ſeveral matters in the conſtitution, particularly to the manner in which, what is called the Executive, is formed, and to the long duration of the Senate; and

if I live to return to America I will uſe all my endeavours to have them altered.* I alſo declare myſelf oppoſed to almoſt the whole of your adminiſtration; for I know it to have been deceitful, if not even perfidious, as I ſhall ſhew in the courſe of this letter. But as to the point of conſolidating the States into a federal government, it ſo happens, that the propoſition for that purpoſe came originally from myſelf. I propoſed it in a letter to Chancellor Livingſton in the ſpring of the year 1782, whilſt that gentleman was miniſter for foreign affairs. The five per cent. duty recommended by Congreſs had then fallen through, having been adopted by ſome of the States, altered by others, rejected by Rhode Iſland, and repealed by Virginia after it had been conſented to. The propoſal in the letter I allude to was to get over the whole difficulty at once, by annexing a continental legiſlative body to Congreſs; for, in order to have any law of the Union uniform, the caſe could only be, that either Congreſs, as it then ſtood, muſt frame the law, and the States ſeverally adopt it without alteration, or, the States muſt elect a Continental Legiſlature for the purpoſe. Chancellor Livingſton, Robert Morris, Go-

* I have always been oppoſed to the mode of refining Government up to an individual, or what is called a ſingle Executive. Such a man will always be the chief of a party. A plurality is far better: It combines the maſs of a nation better together: And beſides this, it is neceſſary to the manly mind of a republic, that it loſes the debaſing idea of obeying an individual.

verneur Morris and myself had a meeting at the house of Robert Morris on the subject of that letter. There was no diversity of opinion on the proposition for a Continental Legislature. The only difficulty was on the manner of bringing the proposition forward. For my own part, as I considered it as a remedy in reserve, that could be applied at any time, *when the States saw themselves wrong enough to be put right* (which did not appear to me to be the case at that time) I did not see the propriety of urging it precipitately, and declined being the publisher of it myself. After this account of a fact, the leaders of your party will scarcely have the hardiness to apply to me the term of antifederalist. But I can go to a date and to a fact beyond this; for the proposition for electing a Continental Convention to form the Continental Government is one of the subjects treated of in the pamphlet *Common Sense*.

Having thus cleared away a little of the rubbish that might otherwise have lain in my way, I return to the point of time at which the present Federal Constitution and your administration began. It was very well said by an anonymous writer in Philadelphia, about a year before that period, that "*thirteen staves and ne'er a hoop will not make a barrel,*" and as any kind of hooping the barrel, however defectively executed, would be better than none, it was scarcely possible but that considerable advantages must arise from the federal hooping of the States. It was with pleasure that every

ſincere friend to America beheld, as the natural effect of union, her riſing proſperity; and it was with grief they ſaw that proſperity mixed, even in the bloſſom, with the germ of corruption. (Monopolies of every kind marked your adminiſtration almoſt in the moment of its commencement. The lands obtained by the revolution were laviſhed upon partizans; the intereſt of the diſbanded ſoldier was ſold to the ſpeculator; injuſtice was acted under the pretence of faith; and the chief of the army became the patron of the fraud.) From ſuch a beginning what could be expected, but what has happened? A mean and ſervile ſubmiſſion to the inſults of one nation, treachery and ingratitude to another.

Some vices make their approach with ſuch a ſplendid appearance, that we ſcarcely know to what claſs of moral diſtinctions they belong. They are rather virtues corrupted, than vices originally. But meanneſs and ingratitude have nothing equivocal in their character. There is not a trait in them that renders them doubtful. They are ſo originally vice, that they are generated in the dung of other vices, and crawl into exiſtence with the filth upon their back. The fugitives have found protection in you, and the levee-room is their place of rendezvous.

As the Federal Conſtitution is a copy, not quite ſo baſe as the original, of the form of the Britiſh government, an imitation of its vices was naturally to be ex-

pected. So intimate is the connection between *form* and *practice*, that to adopt the one is to invite the other. Imitation is naturally progreſſive, and is rapidly ſo in matters that are vicious.

Soon after the Federal Conſtitution arrived in England, I received a letter from a female literary correſpondent (a native of New York) very well mixed with friendſhip, ſentiment and politics. In my anſwer to that letter I permitted myſelf to ramble into the wilderneſs of imagination, and to anticipate what might hereafter be the condition of America. I had no idea that the picture I then drew was realizing ſo faſt, and ſtill leſs that, Mr. Waſhington was hurrying it on. As the extract I allude to is congenial with the ſubject I am upon, I here tranſcribe it.

" You touch me on a very tender point when you " ſay, *that my friends on your ſide the water cannot be* " *reconciled to the idea of my abandoning America, even* " *for my native England.* They are right. I had " rather ſee my horſe Button eating the graſs of Bor- " dentown or Morriſenia, than ſee all the pomp and " ſhew of Europe."

" A thouſand years hence, for I muſt indulge a " few thoughts, perhaps in leſs, America may be " what England now is. The innocence of her cha- " racter, that won the hearts of all nations in her fa- " vour, may ſound like a romance, and her inimita-

" ble virtue as if it had never been. The ruins of
" that liberty, which thouſands bled to obtain,
" may juſt furniſh materials for a village tale, or ex-
" tort a ſigh from ruſtic ſenſibility; whilſt the faſhion-
" able of that day, enveloped in diſſipation, ſhall de-
" ride the principle and deny the fact.

" When we contemplate the fall of empires & the
" extinction of the nations of the ancient world, we
" ſee but little more to excite our regret than the
" mouldering ruins of pompous palaces, magnificent
" monuments, lofty pyramids, and walls and towers
" of the moſt coſtly workmanſhip: But when the
" empire of America ſhall fall, the ſubject for con-
" templative ſorrow will be infinitely greater than
" crumbling braſs or marble can inſpire. It will not
" then be ſaid, here ſtood a temple of vaſt antiquity,
" here roſe a babel of inviſible height, or there a pa-
" lace of ſumptuous extravagance; but here, ah pain-
" ful thought! the nobleſt work of human wiſ-
" dom, the grandeſt ſcene of human glory, the fair
" cauſe of freedom roſe and fell. Read this, and
" then aſk, if I forget America?"

Impreſſed, as I was, with apprehenſions of this kind, I had America conſtantly in mind in all the publications I afterwards made. The firſt, and ſtill more, the ſecond part of Rights of Man bear evident marks of this watchfulneſs; and the Diſſertation on Firſt Principles of Government goes more directly to the

point than either of the former. I now paſs on to other ſubjects.

It will be ſuppoſed by thoſe into whoſe hands this letter may fall, that I have ſome perſonal reſentment againſt you; I will therefore ſettle this point before I proceed farther.

If I have any reſentment, you muſt acknowledge that I have not been haſty in declaring it; neither would it be now declared (for what are private reſentments to the public) if the cauſe of it did not unite itſelf as well with your public as your private character, and with the motives of your political conduct.

The part I acted in the American revolution is well known; I ſhall not here repeat it. I know alſo that had it not been for the aid received from France in men, money and ſhips, that your cold and unmilitary conduct (as I ſhall ſhew in the courſe of this letter) would, in all probability, have loſt America; at leaſt ſhe would not have been the independent nation ſhe now is. You ſlept away your time in the field till the finances of the country were completely exhauſted, and you have but little ſhare in the glory of the final event. It is time, ſir, to ſpeak the undiſguiſed language of hiſtorical truth.

Elevated to the chair of the Preſidency you aſſumed the merit of every thing to yourſelf, and the natural ingratitude of your conſtitution began to appear. You commenced your Preſidential carreer by

encouraging and ſwallowing the groſſeſt adulation, and you travelled America from one end—to the other, to put yourſelf in the way of receiving it. You have as many addreſſes in your cheſt as James the II. As to what were your views, for if you are not great enough to have ambition you are little enough to have vanity, they cannot be directly inferred from expreſſions of your own ; but the partizans of your politics have divulged the ſecret.

John Adams has ſaid (and John, it is known, was always a ſpeller after places and offices, and never thought his little ſervices were highly enough paid) John has ſaid, that as Mr. Waſhington had no child, that the Preſidency ſhould be made hereditary in the family of Lund Waſhington. John might then have counted upon ſome fine-cure for himſelf and a proviſion for his deſcendants. He did not go ſo far as to ſay alſo, that the Vice Preſidency ſhould be hereditary in the family of John Adams. He prudently left that to ſtand upon the ground, that one good turn deſerves another.*

John Adams is one of thoſe men who never contemplated the origin of government, or comprehended any thing of firſt principles. If he had, he muſt have ſeen that the right to ſet up and eſtabliſh hereditary government never did, and never can,

* Two perſons to whom John Adams ſaid this, told me of it. The ſecretary of Mr. Jay was preſent when it was told to me.

exiſt in any generation, at any time whatever; that it is of the nature of treaſon; becauſe it is an attempt to take away the rights of all the minors living at that time, and of all ſucceeding generations. It is of a degree beyond common treaſon. It is a ſin againſt nature. The equal right of generations is a right fixed in the nature of things. It belongs to the ſon when of age, as it belonged to the father before him. John Adams would himſelf deny the right that any former deceaſed generation could have to decree authoritatively a ſucceſſion of Governors over him, or over his children; and yet he aſſumes the pretended right, treaſonable as it is, of acting it himſelf. His ignorance is his beſt excuſe.

John Jay has ſaid (and this John was always the ſycophant of every thing in power, from Mr. Girard in America to Grenville in England) John Jay has ſaid, that the Senate ſhould have been appointed for life. He would then have been ſure of never wanting a lucrative appointment for himſelf, nor have had any fears about impeachments. Theſe are the diſguiſed traitors that call themſelves federaliſts.*

Could I have known to what degree of corruption & perfidy the adminiſtrative part of the government in America had deſcended, I could have been at no loſs to have underſtood the reſervedneſs of Mr.

* If Mr. Jay deſires to know on what authority I ſay this, I will give that authority publicly when he chuſes to call for it.

Waſhington towards me, during my impriſonment in the Luxembourg. There are caſes in which ſilence is a loud language.

I will here explain the cauſe of my impriſonment, and return to Mr. Waſhington afterwards.

In the courſe of that rage, terror and ſuſpicion, which the brutal letter of the Duke of Brunſwick firſt ſtarted into exiſtence in France, it happened, that almoſt every man who was oppoſed to violence, or who was not violent himſelf, became ſuſpected. I had conſtantly been oppoſed to every thing which was of the nature, or of the appearance, of violence; but as I had always done it in a manner that ſhewed it to be a principle founded in my heart, and not a political manœuvre, it precluded the pretence of accuſing me. I was reached, however, under another pretence.

A decree was paſſed to impriſon all perſons born in England; but as I was a member of the Convention, and had been complimented with the honorary ſtile of Citizen of France, as Mr. Waſhington and ſome other Americans had been, this decree fell ſhort of reaching me. A motion was afterwards made and carried, ſupported chiefly by Bourdon de l'Oiſe, for expelling foreigners from the Convention. My expulſion being thus effected, the two committees of Public Safety and of General Sure-

ty, of which Robeſpierre was the dictator, put me in arreſtation under the former decree for impriſoning perſons born in England. Having thus ſhewn under what pretence the impriſonment was effected, I come to ſpeak of ſuch parts of the caſe as apply between me and Mr. Waſhington, either as Preſident or as an individual.

I have always conſidered that a foreigner, ſuch as I was in fact with reſpect to France, might be a member of a Convention for forming a conſtitution, without affecting his right of citizenſhip in the country to which he belongs, but not a member of a government after a conſtitution is formed; and I have uniformly acted upon this diſtinction. To be a member of a government requires that a perſon be in allegiance to that government and to the country locally. But a conſtitution being a thing of principle and not of action, and which, after it be formed, is to be referred to the people for their approbation or rejection, does not require allegiance in the perſons forming and propoſing it; and beſides this, it is only to the thing after it be formed and eſtabliſhed, and to the country after its governmental character is fixed by the adoption of a conſtitution, that allegiance can be given. No oath of allegiance or of citizenſhip was required of the members who compoſed the Convention; there was nothing exiſting in form to ſwear allegiance to. If any ſuch condition

had been required I could not, as Citizen of America in fact, though Citizen of France by compliment, have accepted a ſeat in the Convention.

As my citizenſhip in America was not altered or diminiſhed, by any thing I had done in Europe (on the contrary it ought to have been conſidered as ſtrengthened, for it was the American principle of government that I was endeavouring to ſpread in Europe) and as it is the duty of every government to charge itſelf with the care of any of its citizens who may happen to fall under an arbitrary perſecution abroad, and is alſo one of the reaſons for which Ambaſſadors or Miniſters are appointed,—it was the duty of the executive department in America to have made (at leaſt) ſome enquiries about me, as ſoon as it heard of my impriſonment. But if this had not been the caſe, that government owed it to me on every ground and principle of honor and gratitude. Mr. Waſhington owed it to me on every ſcore of private acquaintance, (I will not now ſay, friendſhip; for it has for ſome time been known, by thoſe who know him, that he has no friendſhips; that he is incapable of forming any; he can ſerve or deſert a man or a cauſe with conſtitutional indifference; and it is this cold hermophrodite faculty that impoſed itſelf upon the world, and was credited for a while by enemies as by friends, for prudence, moderation and impartiality.

Soon after that I was put in arreſtation and impriſoned in the Luxembourg, the Americans who were then in Paris went in a body to the bar of the Convention to reclaim me. They were anſwered by the, then, Preſident, Vadier, who has ſince abſconded, that *I was born in England;* and it was ſignified to them by ſome of the Committee of Surety General, to whom they were referred (I have been told it was Billaud Varrennes) that their reclamation of me was only the act of individuals without any authority from the American government.

A few days after this, all communication from perſons impriſoned to any perſon without the priſon was cut off by an order of the Police. I neither ſaw, nor heard from, any body for ſix months; and the only hope that remained to me was, that a new miniſter would arrive from America to ſupercede Morris, and that he would be authoriſed to enquire into the cauſe of my impriſonment. But even this hope, in the ſtate to which matters were daily arriving, was too remote to have any conſolatory effect, and I contented myſelf with the thought, that I might be remembered when it would be too late. There is perhaps no condition from which a man conſcious of his own uprightneſs cannot derive conſolation; for it is in itſelf a conſolation for him to find that he can bear that condition with calmneſs and fortitude.

From about the middle of March (1794) to the fall of Robeſpierre, 29th July, (9th of Thermidor) the ſtate of things in the priſon was a continued ſcene of horror. No man could count upon life for twenty hours. To ſuch a pitch of rage and ſuſpicion was Robeſpierre and his committee arrived, that it ſeemed as if they feared to leave a man to live. Scarcely a night paſſed but in which ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty or more were taken out of the priſon, carried before a pretended tribunal in the morning, and guillotined before night. One hundred and ſixty nine were taken out of the Luxembourg in one night in the month of July and one hundred and ſixty of them guillotined. A liſt of two hundred more, according to the report in the priſon, was preparing a few days before Robeſpierre fell. In this laſt liſt I have good reaſon to believe I was included. A memorandum, in the hand writing of Robeſpierre, was afterwards produced in the Convention, by the committee to whom the papers of Robeſpierre were referred, in theſe words:

"Demander que Thomas Paine ſoit decreté d'accuſation, pour l'interet de l'Amerique autant que de la France."	Demand that Thomas Paine be decreed of accuſation, for the intereſt of America as well as of France.

I had then been impriſoned ſeven months, and the

ſilence of the executive government of America, Mr. Waſhington, upon the caſe and upon every thing reſpecting me, was explanation enough to Robeſpierre that he might proceed to extremities.

A violent fever which had nearly terminated my exiſtence, was, I believe, the circumſtance that preſerved it. I was not in a condition to be removed, or to know of what was paſſing, or of what had paſſed for more than a month. It makes a blank in my remembrance of life. The firſt thing I was informed of was the fall of Robeſpierre.

About a week after this Mr. Monroe arrived to ſupercede Gouverneur Morris, and as ſoon as I was able to write a note legible enough to be read, I found a way to convey one to him, by means of the man who lighted the lamps in the priſon; and whoſe unabated friendſhip to me, from whom he had never received any ſervice, and with difficulty accepted any recompence, puts the character of Mr. Waſhington to ſhame.

In a few days I received a meſſage from Mr. Monroe, conveyed to me in a note from an intermediate perſon, with aſſurance of his friendſhip, and expreſſing a deſire that I would reſt the caſe in his hands. After a fortnight or more had paſſed and hearing nothing further, I wrote to a friend who was then in Paris, a citizen of Philadelphia, requeſting him to inform me what was the true

ſituation of things with reſpect to me. I was ſure that ſomething was the matter. I began to have hard thoughts of Mr. Waſhington; but I was unwilling to encourage them.

In about ten days I received an anſwer to my letter in which the writer ſays: "Mr. Monroe has "told me that he has no orders (meaning from the "Preſident, Mr. Waſhington) reſpecting you, but "that he (Mr. Monroe) will do every thing in his "power to liberate you; but from what I learn "from the Americans lately arrived in Paris, you "are not conſidered, either by the American govern-"ment or by the individuals, as an American citizen."

I was now at no loſs to underſtand Mr. Waſhington and his new fangled faction, and that their policy was ſilently to leave me to fall in France. They were ruſhing as faſt as they could venture, without awakening the jealouſy of America, into all the vices and corruptions of the Britiſh government; and it was no more conſiſtent with the policy of Mr. Waſhington, and thoſe who immediately ſurrounded him, than it was with that of Robeſpierre or of Pitt, that I ſhould ſurvive. They have however, miſſed the mark and the reaction is upon themſelves.

Upon the receipt of the letter juſt alluded to, I ſent a memorial to Mr. Monroe which the reader will find in the appendix, and I received from him

the following anſwer. It is dated the 18th of September, but did not come to hand till about the 10th of October. I was then falling into a relapſe, the weather was becoming damp and cold, fuel was not to be had, and the abſceſs in my ſide, the conſequence of theſe things, and of the want of air and exerciſe, was beginning to form and which has continued immoveable ever ſince. Here follows Mr. Monroe's letter.

Paris, Sept. 18, 1794.

Dear Sir,

I was favoured ſoon after my arrival here with ſeveral letters from you and more latterly with one in the character of memorial, upon the ſubject of your confinement; and ſhould have anſwered them at the times they were reſpectively written had I not concluded you would have calculated with certainty upon the deep intereſt I take in your welfare and the pleaſure with which I ſhall embrace every opportunity in my power to ſerve you. I ſhould ſtill purſue the ſame courſe, and for reaſons which muſt obviouſly occur, if I did not find that you are diſquieted with apprehenſions upon intereſting points, & which juſtice to you and our country equally forbid you ſhould entertain. You mention that you have been informed you are not conſidered as an American citizen by the Americans, and that you have likewiſe

heard that I had no inſtructions reſpecting you by the government. I doubt not the perſon who gave you the information meant well, but I ſuſpect he did not even convey accurately his own ideas on the firſt point; for I preſume the moſt he could ſay is that you had likewiſe become a French citizen and which by no means deprived you of being an American one. Even this however may be doubted, I mean the acquiſition of citizenſhip in France, and I confeſs you have ſaid much to ſhew that it has not been made. I really ſuſpect that this was all that the gentleman who wrote you, and thoſe Americans he heard ſpeak upon the ſubject, meant. It becomes my duty however to declare to you, that I conſider you as an American citizen, and that you are conſidered univerſally in that character by the people of America. As ſuch you are entitled to my attention; and ſo far as it can be given conſiſtently with thoſe obligations which are mutual between every government and even a tranſient paſſenger you ſhall receive it.

The Congreſs have never decided upon the ſubject of citizenſhip in a manner to regard the preſent caſe. By being with us through the revolution you are of our country as abſolutely as if you had been born there, and you are no more of England than every native American is. This is the true doctrine in the preſent caſe, ſo far as it becomes complicated with any other conſideration. I have mentioned it

to make you easy upon the only point which could give you any disquietude.

Is it necessary for me to tell you how much all your countrymen, I speak of the great mass of the people, are interested in your welfare? They have not forgotten the history of their own revolution and the difficult scenes through which they passed; nor do they review its several stages without reviving in their bosoms a due sensibility of the merits of those who served them in that great and arduous conflict. The crime of ingratitude has not yet stained, and I trust never will stain, our national character. You are considered by them as not only having rendered important services in our own revolution, but as being, on a more extensive scale, the friend of human rights, and a distinguished, an able, advocate in favour of public liberty. To the welfare of Thomas Paine the Americans are not, nor can they be, indifferent.

Of the sense which the President has always entertained of your merits, and of his friendly disposition towards you, you are too well assured to require any declaration of it from me. That I forward his wishes in seeking your safety is what I well know, and this will form an additional obligation on me to perform what I should otherwise consider as a duty.

You are, in my opinion, at present, menaced by no kind of danger. To liberate you will be the ob-

ject of my endeavours, and as ſoon as poſſible. But you muſt, until that event ſhall be accompliſhed, bear your ſituation with patience and fortitude. You will likewiſe have the juſtice to recollect, that I am placed here upon a difficult theatre,* many important objects to attend to, with few to conſult. It becomes me in purſuit of thoſe to regulate my conduct in reſpect to each, as to the manner and the time, as will, in my judgment, be beſt calculated to accompliſh the whole. With great eſteem and reſpect conſider me perſonally your friend.

JAMES MONROE.

The part in Mr. Monroe's letter in which he ſpeaks of the Preſident (Mr. Waſhington) is put in ſoft language. Mr. Monroe knew what Mr. Waſhington had ſaid formerly, and he was willing to keep that in view. But the fact is, not only that Mr. Waſhington had given no orders to Mr. Monroe, as the letter ſtated; but he did not ſo much as ſay to him, enquire if Mr. Paine be dead or alive, in priſon or out, or ſee if there is any aſſiſtance we can given him.

While theſe matters were paſſing the liberations from the priſons were numerous; from twenty to forty in the courſe of almoſt every twenty four hours.

* This I preſume alludes to the embarraſſments which the ſtrange conduct of Gouv. Morris had occaſioned, and which, I well know, had created ſuſpicions upon the ſincerity of Mr. Waſhington.

The continuance of my impriſonment, after a new miniſter had arrived immediately from America, which was now more than two months, was a matter ſo obviouſly ſtrange, that I found the character of the American government ſpoken of in very unqualified terms of reproach; not only by thoſe who ſtill remained in priſon, but by thoſe who were liberated, and by perſons who had acceſs to the priſon from without. Under theſe circumſtances I wrote again to Mr. Monroe, and found occaſion, among other things to ſay: "It will not add to the popula-
"rity of Mr. Waſhington to have it believed in Ame-
"rica, as it is believed here, that he connives at my
"impriſonment."

The caſe, ſo far as it reſpected Mr. Monroe was, that having to get over the difficulties which the ſtrange conduct of Gouverneur Morris had thrown in the way of a ſucceſſor, and having no authority from the American government to ſpeak officially upon any thing relating to me, he found himſelf obliged to proceed by unofficial means with individual members; for though Robeſpierre was overthrown, the Robeſpierrian members of the Committee of Public Safety ſtill remained in conſiderable force, and had they found out that Mr. Monroe had no official authority upon the caſe, they would have paid little or no regard to his reclamation of me. In the mean time my health was ſuffering exceedingly, the dreary

proſpect of winter was coming on, and impriſonment was ſtill a thing of danger.

After the Robeſpierrian members of the Committee were removed by the expiration of their time of ſerving, Mr. Monroe reclaimed me, and I was liberated the 4th of November. Mr. Monroe arrived in Paris the beginning of Auguſt before. All that period of my impriſonment, at leaſt, I owe not to Robeſpierre, but to his colleague in projects, George Waſhington. Immediately upon my liberation Mr. Monroe invited me to his houſe, where I remained more than a year and an half; and I ſpeak of his aid and his friendſhip, as an open hearted man will always do in ſuch a caſe, with reſpect and gratitude.

Soon after my liberation the Convention paſſed an unanimous vote to invite me to return to my ſeat among them. The times were ſtill unſettled and dangerous, as well from without as from within, for the coalition was unbroken, and the conſtitution not ſettled. I choſe, however, to accept the invitation; for as I undertake nothing but what I believe to be right, I abandon nothing that I undertake; and I was willing alſo to ſhew, that, as I was not of a caſt of mind to be deterred by proſpects or retro-proſpects of danger, ſo neither were my principles to be weakened by misfortune, or perverted by diſguſt.

Being now once more abroad in the world I began to find that I was not the only one who had conceived an unfavourable opinion of Mr. Washington. It was evident that his character was on the decline as well among Americans as among foreigners of different nations. From being the chief of a government, he had made himself the chief of a party; and his integrity was queſtioned, for his politics had a doubtful appearance. The miſſion of Mr. Jay to London, notwithſtanding there was an American miniſter there already, had then taken place, and was beginning to be talked of. It appeared to others, as it did to me, to be enveloped in myſtery, which every day ſerved either to encreaſe or to explain into matter of ſuſpicion.

In the year 1790, or about that time, Mr. Waſhington as Preſident had ſent Gouverneur Morris to London as his ſecret agent to have ſome communication with the Britiſh miniſtry. To cover the agency of Morris it was given out, I know not by whom, that he went as an agent from Robert Morris to borrow money in Europe, and the report was permitted to paſs uncontradicted. The event of Morris's negociation was, that Mr. Hammond was ſent miniſter from England to America, and Pinckney from America to England, and himſelf miniſter to France. If while Morris was miniſter in France he was not an emiſſary of the Britiſh miniſtry and the

coalesced powers, he gave strong reasons to suspect him of it. No one who saw his conduct, and heard his conversation, could doubt his being in their interest; and had he not got off at the time he did, after his recall, he would have been in arrestation. Some letters of his had fallen into the hands of the Committee of Public Safety, and enquiry was making after him.

A great bustle has been made by Mr. Washington about the conduct of Genet in America; while that of his own minister, Morris, in France was infinitely more reproachable. If Genet was imprudent or rash, he was not treacherous; but Morris was all three. He was the enemy of the French revolution in every stage of it. But, notwithstanding this conduct on the part of Morris, and the known profligacy of his character, Mr. Washington, in a letter he wrote to him at the time of recalling him on the complaint and request of the Committee of Public Safety, assures him, that though he had complied with that request, he still retained the same esteem and friendship for him as before. This letter Morris was foolish enough to tell of; and, as his own character and conduct were notorious, the telling of it could have but one effect, which was that of implicating the character of the writer. Morris still loiters in Europe, chiefly in England; and Mr. Washington is still in correspondence with him:

Mr. Washington ought therefore to expect, especially since his conduct in the affair of Jay's treaty, that France must consider Morris and Washington as men of the same description. The chief difference, however, between the two is (for in politics there is none) that the one is profligate enough to profess an indifference about *moral* principles, and the other is prudent enough to conceal the want of them.

About three months after I was at liberty, the official note of Jay to Grenville on the subject of the capture of American vessels by British cruisers appeared in the American papers that arrived at Paris. Every thing was of a-piece. Every thing was mean. The same kind of character went to all circumstances public or private. Disgusted at this national degradation, as well as at the particular conduct of Mr. Washington to me, I wrote to him (Mr. Washington) on the 22d of February (1795) under cover to the then Secretary of State (Mr. Randolph) and entrusted the letter to Mr. Letombe, who was appointed French consul to Philadelphia, and was on the point of taking his departure. When I supposed Mr. Letombe had sailed, I mentioned the letter to Mr. Monroe, and as I was then in his house, I shewed it to him. He expressed a wish that I would recall it, which he supposed might be done, as he had learned that Mr. Letombe

had not then failed. I agreed to do ſo, and it was returned by Mr. Letombe under cover to Mr. Monroe.

The letter, however, will now reach Mr. Waſhington publicly, in the courſe of this work.

About the month of September following, I had a ſevere relapſe, which gave occaſion to the report of my death. I had felt it coming on a conſiderable time before, which occaſioned me to haſten the work I had then in hand, the *Second part of the Age of Reaſon.* When I had finiſhed that work, I beſtowed another letter on Mr. Waſhington, which I ſent under cover to Mr. Benj. Franklin Bache of Philadelphia. The letter is as follows.

To George Washington, President of the United States.

Paris, Sept. 20th, 1795.

Sir,

I had written you a letter by Mr. Letombe, French conſul, but at the requeſt of Mr. Monroe I withdrew it, and the letter is ſtill by me. I was the more eaſily prevailed upon to do this, as it was then my intention to have returned to America the latter end of the preſent year, 1795; but the illneſs I now ſuffer prevents me. In caſe I had come, I ſhould

have applied to you for such parts of your official letters (and of your private ones, if you had chosen to give them) as contained any instructions or directions either to Mr. Monroe, or to Mr. Morris, or to any other person respecting me; for, after you were informed of my imprisonment in France, it was incumbent on you to have made some enquiry into the cause, as you might very well conclude, that I had not the opportunity of informing you of it. I cannot understand your silence upon this subject upon any other ground, than as connivance at my imprisonment; and this is the manner it is understood here, and will be understood in America, unless you can give me authority for contradicting it. I therefore write you this letter, to propose to you to send me copies of any letters you have written, that may remove that suspicion. In the preface to the second part of the Age of Reason, I have given a memorandum from the hand writing of Robespierre, in which he proposed a decree of accusation against me, "*for the interest of America as well as of France.*" He could have no cause for putting America into the case, but by interpreting the silence of the American government into connivance and consent. I was imprisoned on the ground of being born in England; and your silence in not enquiring into the cause of that imprisonment and reclaiming me against it, was tacitly giving me up.

I ought not to have ſuſpected you of treachery; but whether I recover from the illneſs I now ſuffer or not, I ſhall continue to think you treacherous, till you give me cauſe to think otherwiſe. I am ſure you would have found yourſelf more at your eaſe had you acted by me as you ought; for, whether your deſertion of me was intended to gratify the Engliſh government, or to let me fall into deſtruction in France, that you might exclaim the louder againſt the French revolution, or whether you hoped by my extinction to meet with leſs oppoſition in mounting up the American government,—either of theſe will involve you in reproach you will not eaſily ſhake off.

THOMAS PAINE.

Here follows the letter above alluded to, which I had ſtopped in complaiſance to Mr. Monroe.

To GEORGE WASHINGTON, PRESIDENT of the UNITED STATES.

Paris, Feb. 22d, 1795.

SIR,

As it is always painful to reproach thoſe one would wiſh to reſpect, it is not without ſome difficulty that I have taken the reſolution to write to you.

The dangers to which I have been expoſed cannot have been unknown to you, and the guarded ſilence you have obſerved upon that circumſtance is what I ought not to have expected from you, either as a friend or as Preſident of the United States.

You know enough of my character to be aſſured, that I could not have deſerved impriſonment in France, and without knowing any thing more than this, you had ſufficient ground to have taken ſome intereſt for my ſafety. Every motive ariſing from recollection of times paſt, ought to have ſuggeſted to you the propriety of ſuch a meaſure. But I cannot find that you have ſo much as directed any enquiry to be made, whether I was in priſon or at liberty, dead or alive; what the cauſe of that impriſonment was, or whether there was any ſervice or aſſiſtance you could render. Is this what I ought to have expected from America after the part I have acted towards her, or will it redound to her honour or to yours, that I tell the ſtory. I do not heſitate to ſay, that you have not ſerved America with more diſintereſtedneſs or greater zeal, or more fidelity, than myſelf, and I know not if with better effect. After the revolution of America was eſtabliſhed I ventured into new ſcenes of difficulties to extend the principles which that revolution had produced, and you reſted at home to partake of the advantages. In the progreſs of events you beheld yourſelf a Preſident in America

and me a priſoner in France. You folded your arms, forgot your friend, and became ſilent.

As every thing I have been doing in Europe was connected with my wiſhes for the proſperity of America, I ought to be the more ſurpriſed at this conduct on the part of her government. It leaves me but one mode of explanation, which is, *that every thing is not as it ought to be amongſt you*, and that the preſence of a man who might diſapprove, and who had credit enough with the Country to be heard and believed, was not wiſhed for. This was the operating motive with the deſpotic faction that impriſoned me in France (tho' the pretence was, that I was a foreigner) and thoſe that have been ſilent and inactive towards me in America, appear to me to have acted from the ſame motive, of wiſhing me out of the way. It is impoſſible for me to diſcover any other.

Conſidering the part I have acted in the revolution of America it is natural that I feel intereſted in whatever relates to her character and proſperity. Though I am not on the ſpot, to ſee what is immediately acting there, I ſee ſome part of what ſhe is acting in Europe. For your own ſake, as well as for that of America, I was both ſurpriſed and concerned at the appointment of Gouverneur Morris to be miniſter to France. His conduct has proved that the opinion I had formed of that appointment was well founded. I wrote that opinion to Mr. Jefferſon

at the time, and I was frank enough to say the same thing to Morris—*that it was an unfortunate appointment.* His prating, insignificant pomposity, rendered him at once offensive, suspected, and ridiculous; and his total neglect of all business had so disgusted the Americans, that they proposed entering a protest against him. He carried this neglect to such an extreme, that it was necessary to inform him of it, and I asked him one day if he did not feel himself ashamed to take the money of the country and do nothing for it. But Morris is so fond of profit and voluptuousness that he cares nothing about character. Had he not been removed at the time he was, I think his conduct would have precipitated the two countries into a rupture; and in this case, hated *systematically*, as America is and ever will be by the British government, and suspected by France, the commerce of America would have fallen a prey to both countries.

If the inconsistent conduct of Morris exposed the interest of America to some hazard in France, the pusillanimous conduct of Mr. Jay in England has rendered the character of the American government contemptible in Europe. Is it possible that any man who has contributed to the independence of America, and to free her from the tyranny and injustice of the British government, can read, without shame and indignation, the note of Jay to Grenville.

It is a ſatire upon the declaration of Independence, and an encouragement to the Britiſh government to treat America with contempt. At the time this miniſter of petitions was acting this miſerable part, he had every means in his hands to enable him to have done his buſineſs as he ought. The ſucceſs or failure of his miſſion depended upon the ſucceſs or failure of the French arms. Had France failed, Mr. Jay might have put his humble petition in his pocket and gone home. The caſe happened to be otherwiſe, and he has ſacrificed the honour and perhaps all the advantages of it, by turning petitioner. I take it for granted, that he was ſent to demand indemnification for the captured property; and in this caſe, if he thought he wanted a preamble to his demand, he might have ſaid: "That tho' the government of England might ſuppoſe itſelf under the neceſſity of ſeizing American property bound to France, yet that ſuppoſed neceſſity could not preclude indemnification to the proprietors, who, acting under the authority of their own government, were not accountable to any other."—But Mr. Jay ſets out with an implied recognition of the right of the Britiſh government to ſeize and condemn; for he enters his complaint againſt the *irregularity* of the ſeizures and the condemnation, as if they were reprehenſible only by not being *conformable* to the *terms* of the proclamation

under which they were ſeized. Inſtead of being the Envoy of a government he goes over like a lawyer to demand a new trial. I can hardly help believing, that Grenville wrote the note himſelf and Jay ſigned it, for the ſtile of it is domeſtic and not diplomatic. The term, *His* Majeſty, uſed without any deſcriptive epithet, always ſignifies the king whom the Miniſter that ſpeaks repreſents. If this ſinking of the demand into a petition was a juggle between Grenville and Jay, to cover the indemnification, I think it will end in another juggle, that of never paying the money, and be made uſe of afterwards to preclude the right of demanding it; for Mr. Jay has virtually diſowned the right, *by appealing to the magnanimity of his Majeſty againſt the capturers.* He has appointed this magnanimous Majeſty to be umpire in the caſe, and the government of the United States muſt abide by the deciſion. If, Sir, I turn ſome part of this affair into ridicule, it is to avoid the unpleaſant ſenſation of ſerious indignation.

Among other things, which I confeſs I do not underſtand, is the proclamation of neutrality. This has always appeared to me as an aſſumption on the part of the executive not warranted by the conſtitution. But paſſing this over, as a diſputable caſe, and conſidering it only as political, the conſequence has been that of ſuſtaining the loſſes of war without the

balance of repriſals. When the profeſſion of neutrality on the part of America was anſwered by hoſtilities on the part of Britain, the object and intention of that neutrality exiſted no longer, and to maintain it after this was not only to encourage further inſults and depredations, but was an informal breach of neutrality towards France, by paſſively contributing to the aid of her enemy. That the government of England conſidered the American government as puſillanimous is evident from the encreaſing inſolence of the former towards the latter, till the affair of General Wayne. She then ſaw it might be poſſible to kick a government into ſome degree of ſpirit. So far as the proclamation of neutrality was intended to prevent a diſſolute ſpirit of privateering in America under foreign colours, it was undoubtedly laudable; but to continue it as a government neutrality, after the commerce of the country was made war upon, was ſubmiſſion and not neutrality. I have heard ſo much about this thing called neutrality, that I know not if the ungenerous and diſhonorable ſilence (for I muſt call it ſuch) that has been obſerved by your part of the government towards me, during my impriſonment, has not in ſome meaſure ariſen from that policy.

Tho' I have written you this letter, you ought not to ſuppoſe it has been an agreeable undertaking to me. On the contrary, I aſſure you, it has coſt me

ſome diſquietude. I am ſorry you have given me cauſe to do it; for as I have always remembered your former friendſhip with pleaſure, I ſuffer a loſs by your depriving me of that ſentiment.

THOMAS PAINE.

That this letter was not written in very good temper is very evident; but it was juſt ſuch a letter as his conduct appeared to me to merit, and every thing on his part ſince has ſerved to confirm that opinion. Had I wanted a commentary on his ſilence with reſpect to my impriſonment in France, ſome of his faction has furniſhed me with it. What I here allude to is a publication in a Philadelphia paper, copied afterwards into a New York paper, both under the patronage of the Waſhington faction, in which the writer, ſtill ſuppoſing me in priſon in France, wonders at my lengthy reſpite from the ſcaffold; and he marks his politics ſtill further by ſaying: "It appears moreover, that the people "of England did not reliſh his (Thomas Paine's) "opinions quite ſo well as he expected, and that "for one of his laſt pieces, as deſtructive to "the peace and happineſs of their country, "(meaning, I ſuppoſe, the *Rights of Man*) they "threatened our knight-errant with ſuch ſerious "vengeance, that, to avoid a trip to Botany-bay, "he fled over to France, as a leſs dangerous voyage."

I am not refuting or contradicting the falſhood of this publication, for it is ſufficiently notorious; neither am I cenſuring the writer; on the contrary I thank him for the explanation he has incautiouſly given of the principles of the Waſhington faction. Inſignificant, however, as the piece is, it was capable of having had ſome ill effect, had it arrived in France during my impriſonment and in the time of Robeſpierre; and I am not uncharitable in ſuppoſing that this was the intention of the writer.*

I have now done with Mr. Waſhington on the ſcore of private affairs. It would have been far more agreeable to me, had his conduct been ſuch as not to have merited theſe reproaches. Errors or caprices of the temper can be pardoned and forgotten; but a cold deliberate crime of the heart, ſuch as Mr. Waſhington is capable of acting, is not to be waſhed away. I now proceed to other matter.

After Jay's note to Grenville arrived in Paris from America, the character of every thing that was to follow might be eaſily foreſeen; and it was upon this anticipation that my letter of February 22d was founded. The event has proved, that I was not miſtaken, except that it has been much worſe than I expected.

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* I know not who the writer of the piece is; but ſome late Americans ſay it is Phineas Bond, an American refugee, and now a Britiſh Conſul; and that he writes under the ſignature of Peter Skunk, or Peter Porcupine, or ſome ſuch ſignature.

It would naturally occur to Mr. Washington, that the secrecy of Jay's mission to England, where there was already an American minister, could not but create some suspicion in the French government; especially as the conduct of Morris had been notorious, and the intimacy of Mr. Washington with Morris was known.

The character which Mr. Washington has attempted to act in the world, is a sort of non-describable, cameleon-coloured thing, called *prudence*. It is, in many cases, a substitute for principle, and is so nearly allied to hypocrisy, that it easily slides into it. His genius for prudence furnished him in this instance with an expedient, that served, as is the natural and general character of all expedients, to diminish the embarrassments of the moment and multiply them afterwards; for he authorised it to be made known to the French government, as a confidential matter (Mr. Washington should recollect that I was a member of the Convention, & had the means of knowing what I here state) he authorized it, I say, to be made known, and that for the purpose of preventing any uneasiness to France on the score of Mr. Jay's mission to England, that the object of that mission, and of Mr. Jay's authority, was restricted to that of demanding the surrender of the western posts and indemnification for the cargoes captured in American vessels. Mr. Washington knows

that this was untrue; and knowing this, he had good reaſon to himſelf for refuſing to furniſh the Houſe of Repreſentatives with copies of the inſtructions given to Jay; as he might ſuſpect, among other things, that he ſhould alſo be called upon for copies of inſtructions given to other miniſters, and that in the contradiction of inſtructions his want of integrity would be detected. Mr. Waſhington may now, perhaps, learn, when it is too late, to be of any uſe to him, that a man will paſs better through the world with a thouſand open errors upon his back, than in being detected in ONE ſly falſhood. When one is detected, a thouſand are ſuſpected.

The firſt account that arrived in Paris of a treaty being negociated by Mr. Jay (for nobody ſuſpected any) came in an Engliſh newſpaper, which announced that a treaty *offenſive* and *defenſive* had been concluded between the United States of America and England. This was immediately denied by every American in Paris, as an impoſſible thing; and though it was diſbelieved by the French, it imprinted a ſuſpicion that ſome underhand buſineſs was going forward.* At length the treaty itſelf arrived, and every well-affected American bluſhed with ſhame.

* It was the embarraſſment into which the affairs and credit of America were thrown at this inſtant by the report above alluded to, that made it neceſſary to contradict it, and that by every means ariſing from opinion or founded upon authority. The Committee of Public Safety, exiſting at that time, had agreed to

It is curious to obſerve how the appearances of character will change, whilſt the root that produces them remains the ſame. The Waſhington adminiſtration having waded through the ſlough of negociation, and whilſt it amuſed France with profeſſions of friendſhip contrived to injure her, immediately throws off the hypocrite, and aſſumes the ſwaggering air of a bravado. The party papers of that imbecile adminiſtration were on this occaſion filled with paragraphs about *Sovereignty*. A paltroon may boaſt of his ſovereign right to let another kick him, and this is the only kind of ſovereignty ſhewn in the treaty with England. But theſe daſhing paragraphs, as Timothy Pickering well knows, were intended for France; without whoſe aſſiſtance in men, money and

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the full execution, on their part, of the treaty between America and France, notwithſtanding ſome equivocal conduct on the part of the American government, not very conſiſtent with the good faith of an ally; but they were not in a diſpoſition to be impoſed upon by a counter-treaty. That Jay had no inſtructions beyond the points above ſtated, or none that could poſſibly be conſtrued to extend to the length the Britiſh treaty goes, was a matter believed in America, in England and in France; and without going to any other ſource it followed naturally from the meſſage of the Preſident to Congreſs, when he nominated Jay upon that miſſion. The ſecretary of Mr. Jay came to Paris ſoon after the treaty with England had been concluded, and brought with him a copy of Mr. Jay's inſtructions, which he offered to ſhew to me as a *juſtification of Jay*. I adviſed him, as a friend, not to ſhew them to any body, and did not permit him to ſhew them to me. Who is I, ſaid I to him, that you intend to implicate as cenſureable by ſhewing thoſe inſtructions? Perhaps that implication may fall upon your own government. Though I did not ſee the inſtructions I could not be at a loſs to underſtand, that the American adminiſtration had been playing a double game.

ſhips, Mr. Waſhington would have cut but a poor figure in the American war. But of his military talents I ſhall ſpeak hereafter.

I mean not to enter into any diſcuſſion of any article of Jay's treaty: I ſhall ſpeak only upon the whole of it. It is attempted to be juſtified on the ground of its not being a violation of any article or articles of the treaty pre-exiſting with France. But the ſovereign right of explanation does not lie with George Waſhington and his man Timothy; France, on her part, has, at leaſt, an equal right; and when nations diſpute, it is not ſo much about words as about things.

A man, ſuch as the world calls, a ſharper, and verſed, as Jay muſt be ſuppoſed to be, in the quibbles of the law, may find a way to enter into engagements, and make bargains in ſuch a manner as to cheat ſome other party, without that party being able, as the phraſe is, *to take the law of him.* This often happens in the cabaliſtical circle of what is called law. But when this is attempted to be acted on the national ſcale of treaties, it is too deſpicable to be defended, or to be permitted to exiſt. Yet this is the trick upon which Jay's treaty is founded, ſo far as it has relation to the treaty pre-exiſting with France. It is a counter-treaty to that treaty, and perverts all the great articles of that treaty to the injury of France, and makes them operate as a bounty to England with whom France is at war.

The Waſhington adminiſtration ſhews great deſire, that the treaty between France and the United States be preſerved. Nobody can doubt their ſincerity upon this matter. There is not a Britiſh miniſter, a Britiſh merchant, or a Britiſh agent or ſailor in America, that does not anxiouſly wiſh the ſame thing. The treaty with France ſerves now as a paſſport to ſupply England with naval ſtores and other articles of American produce, whilſt the ſame articles, when coming to France, are made contraband or ſeizable by Jay's treaty with England. The treaty with France ſays, that neutral ſhips make neutral property, and thereby gives protection to Engliſh property on board American ſhips; and Jay's treaty delivers up French property on board American ſhips to be ſeized by the Engliſh. It is too paltry to talk of faith, of national honour, and of the preſervation of treaties, whilſt ſuch a bare-faced treachery as this ſtares the world in the face.

The Waſhington adminiſtration may ſave itſelf the trouble of proving to the French government its *moſt faithful* intentions of preſerving the treaty with France; for France has now no deſire that it ſhould be preſerved. She had nominated an Envoy extraordinary to America, to make Mr. Waſhington and his government a preſent of the treaty, and to have no more to do with *that* or with *him*. It was, at the ſame time, officially declared to the American mi-

niſter at Paris, *that the French Republic had rather have the American government for an open enemy than a treacherous friend.* This, ſir, together with the internal diſtractions cauſed in America, and the loſs of character in the world, is the *eventful criſis*, alluded to in the beginning of this letter, to which your double politics have brought the affairs of your country. It is time that the eyes of America be opened upon you.

How France would have conducted herſelf towards America and American commerce after all treaty ſtipulations had ceaſed, and under the ſenſe of ſervices rendered and injuries received, I know not. It is, however, an unpleaſant reflection, that in all national quarrels, the innocent, and even the friendly, part of the community, become involved with the culpable and the unfriendly; and as the accounts that arrived from America continued to manifeſt an invariable attachment in the general maſs of the people to their original ally, in oppoſition to the new-fangled Waſhington faction,—the reſolutions that had been taken were ſuſpended. It happened alſo fortunately enough, that Gouverneur Morris was not miniſter at this time.

There is, however, one point that yet remains in embryo, and which, among other things, ſerves to ſhew the ignorance of the Waſhington treaty-makers, and their inattention to pre-exiſting treaties

when they were employing themſelves in framing or ratifying the new treaty with England.

The ſecond article of the treaty of commerce between the United States and France ſays: "The "moſt chriſtian king and the United States engage "mutually, not to grant any particular favour to "other nations in reſpect of commerce and naviga- "tion that ſhall not immediately become common "to the other party, who ſhall enjoy the ſame fa- "vour freely, if the conceſſion was freely made, or "on allowing the ſame compenſation if the con- "ceſſion was conditional."

All the conceſſions therefore made to England by Jay's treaty are, through the medium of this ſecond article in the pre-exiſting treaty, made to France, and become engrafted into the treaty with France, and can be exerciſed by her as a matter of right, the ſame as by England.

Jay's treaty makes a conceſſion to England, and that unconditionally, of ſeizing naval ſtores in American ſhips and condemning them as contraband. It makes alſo a conceſſion to England to ſeize proviſions and *other articles* in American ſhips. *Other articles* are *all other articles*, and none but an ignoramus, or ſomething worſe, would have put ſuch a phraſe into a treaty. The condition annexed to this caſe is, that the proviſions and other articles ſo ſeized are to be paid for at a price to be a-

greed upon. Mr. Washington, as President, ratified this treaty after he knew the British government had recommenced an indiscriminate seizure of provisions and of all other articles in American ships; and it is now known that those seizures were made to fit out the expedition going to Quiberon Bay, and it was known, before hand that they would be made. The evidence goes, also, a good way to prove that Jay and Grenville understood each other upon that subject. Mr. Pinckney, when he passed through France on his way to Spain, spoke of the recommencement of the seizures as a thing that would take place. The French government had by some means received information from London to the same purpose, with the addition, that the recommencement of the seizures would cause no misunderstanding between the British and American governments. Grenville, in defending himself against the opposition in Parliament on account of the scarcity of corn, said (see his speech at the opening of the Parliament that met Oct. 29th 1795) that *the supplies for the Quiberon expedition were furnished out of the American ships;* and all the accounts received at that time from England stated, that those seizures were made under the treaty. After the supplies for the Quiberon expedition had been procured and the expected success had failed, the seizures were counter manded; and, had the French

ſeized proviſion veſſels going to England, it is probable that the Quiberon expedition could not have been attempted.

In one point of view, the treaty with England operates as a loan to the Engliſh government. It gives permiſſion to that government to take American property at ſea to any amount and pay for it when it ſuits her; and beſides this, the treaty is in every point of view a ſurrender of the rights of American commerce and navigation, and a refuſal to France of the rights of neutrality. The American flag is not now a neutral flag to France: Jay's treaty of ſurrender gives a monopoly of it to England.

On the contrary, the treaty of commerce between America and France was formed on the moſt liberal principles, and calculated to give the greateſt encouragement to the infant commerce of America. France was neither a carrier nor an exporter of naval ſtores or of proviſions. Thoſe articles belonged wholly to America, and they had all the protection in that treaty which a treaty could give. But ſo much has that treaty been perverted, that the liberality of it, on the part of France, has ſerved to encourage Jay to form a counter-treaty with England; for he muſt have ſuppoſed the hands of France tied up by her treaty with America, when he was making ſuch large conceſſions in favour of

England. The injury which Mr. Washington's administration has done to the character as well as to the commerce of America is too great to be repaired by him. Foreign nations will be shy of making treaties with a government that has given the faithless example of perverting the liberality of a former treaty to the injury of the party with whom it was made.

In what a fraudulent light must Mr. Washington's character appear in the world, when his declarations and his conduct are compared together! Here follows the letter he wrote to the Committee of Public Safety whilst Jay was negociating in profound secrecy this treacherous treaty.

" George Washington, President of the United States of America, to the Representatives of the French people, members of the Committee of Public Safety of the *French Republic, the great and good friend and ally of the United States.*

" On the intimation of the wish of the French Republic, that a new minister should be sent from the United States, I resolved to manifest my sense of the readiness with which *my* request was fulfilled [that of recalling Genet] by immediately fulfilling the request of your government [that of recalling Morris.]

" It was some time before a character could be obtained, worthy of the high office of expressing the

attachment of the United States to the happineſs of our allies, *and drawing cloſer the bonds of our friendſhip*. I have now made choice of James Monroe, one of our diſtinguiſhed citizens, to reſide near the French republic, in quality of miniſter plenipotentiary of the United States of America. He is inſtructed to bear to you our *ſincere ſolicitude for your welfare, and to cultivate with zeal the cordiality ſo happily ſubſiſting between us*. From a knowledge of his fidelity, probity and good conduct, I have entire confidence that he will render himſelf acceptable to you, and give effect to our deſire of preſerving and *advancing, on all occaſions, the intereſt and connection of the two nations*. I beſeech you therefore to give full credence to whatever he ſhall ſay to you on the part of the United States, and, *moſt of all, when he ſhall aſſure you that your proſperity is an object of our affection*, and I pray God to have the French republic in his holy keeping.

"G°. WASHINGTON."

Was it by entering into a treaty with England, to ſurrender French property on board American ſhips to be ſeized by the Engliſh, whilſt Engliſh property on board American ſhips was declared by the French treaty not to be ſeizable, *that the bonds of friendſhip between America and France were to be drawn the cloſer*? Was it by declaring naval ſtores contraband

when coming to France, when by the French treaty they were not contraband when going to England, that the *connection between France and America was to be advanced*? Was it by opening the American ports to the Britiſh navy in the preſent war, from which ports that ſame navy had been expelled by the aid ſolicited from France in the American war (and that aid gratuitouſly given) that the gratitude of America was to be ſhewn, and the *ſolicitude* ſpoken of in the letter demonſtrated?

As the letter was addreſſed to the Committee of Public Safety, Mr Waſhington did not expect it would get abroad in the world, or be ſeen by any other eye than that of Robeſpierre, or be heard by any other ear than that of the Committee; that it would paſs as a whiſper acroſs the Atlantic, from one dark chamber to the other, and there terminate. It was calculated to remove from the mind of the Committee all ſuſpicion upon Jay's miſſion to England, and, in this point of view, it was ſuited to the circumſtances of the moment then paſſing; but as the event of that miſſion has proved the letter to be hypocritical, it ſerves no other purpoſe of the preſent moment than to ſhew that the writer is not to be credited. Two circumſtances ſerved to make the reading of the letter neceſſary in the Convention. The one was, that thoſe who ſucceeded on the fall of Robeſpierre, found it moſt proper to act with

publicity; the other, to extinguiſh the ſuſpicions which the ſtrange conduct of Morris had occaſioned in France.

When the Britiſh treaty, and the ratification of it by Mr. Waſhington, was known in France, all further declarations from him of his good diſpoſition, as an ally and a friend, paſſed for ſo many cyphers; but ſtill it appeared neceſſary to him to keep up the farce of declarations. It is ſtipulated in the Britiſh treaty, that commiſſioners are to report at the end of two years on the caſe of *neutral ſhips making neutral property*. In the mean time neutral ſhips do *not* make neutral property, according to the Britiſh treaty, and they *do*, according to the French treaty. The preſervation, therefore, of the French treaty became of great importance to England, as by that means ſhe can employ American ſhips as carriers, whilſt the ſame advantage is denied to France. Whether the French treaty could exiſt as a matter of right after this clandeſtine perverſion of it, could not but give ſome apprehenſions to the partizans of the Britiſh treaty, and it became neceſſary to them to make up, by fine words, what was wanting in good actions.

An opportunity offered to that purpoſe. The Convention, on the public reception of Mr. Monroe, ordered the American flag and the French flag to be diſplayed unitedly in the hall of the Conven-

tion. Mr. Monroe made a preſent of an American flag for the purpoſe. The Convention returned this compliment by ſending a French flag to America, to be preſented by their miniſter, Mr. Adet, to the American government. This reſolution paſſed long before Jay's treaty was known or ſuſpected; it paſſed in the days of confidence; but the flag was not preſented by Mr. Adet till ſeveral months after the treaty had been ratified. Mr. Waſhington made this the occaſion of ſaying ſome fine things to the French Miniſter, and the better to get himſelf into tune to do this, he began by ſaying the fineſt things of himſelf.

" Born, ſir (ſaid he) in a land of liberty; *having* " early learned its value; *having* engaged in a peri- " lous conflict to defend it; *having*, in a word, de- " voted the beſt years of my life to ſecure its per- " manent eſtabliſhment in my own country; *my* " anxious recollections, *my* ſympathetic feelings, " and *my* beſt wiſhes are irreſiſtibly excited, when- " ever, in any country, I ſee an oppreſſed people " unfurl the banners of freedom."

Mr. Waſhington having expended ſo many fine phraſes upon himſelf, was obliged to invent a new one for the French, and he calls them " wonderful people!" The coaleſced powers acknowledge as much.

It is laughable to hear Mr. Waſhington talk of

his *ſympathetic feelings*, who has always been remarked, even among his friends, for not having any. He has, however, given no proof of any to me. As to the pompous encomiums he ſo liberally pays to himſelf, on the ſcore of the American revolution, the reality of them may be queſtioned; and ſince he has forced them ſo much into notice, it is fair to examine his pretenſions.

A ſtranger might be led to ſuppoſe from the egotiſm with which Mr. Waſhington ſpeaks, that himſelf, and himſelf only, had generated, conducted, compleated, and eſtabliſhed the revolution: In fine, that it was all his own doing.

In the firſt place, as to the political part, he had no ſhare in it; and therefore the whole of *that* is out of the queſtion with reſpect to him. There remains then only the military part, and it would have been prudent in Mr. Waſhington not to have awakened enquiry upon that ſubject. Fame then was cheap; he enjoyed it cheaply; and nobody was diſpoſed to take away the laurels, that, whether they were *acquired* or not, had been *given*.

Mr. Waſhington's merit conſiſted in conſtancy. But conſtancy was the common virtue of the revolution. Who was there that was inconſtant? I know of but one military defection, that of Arnold; and I know of no political defection, among thoſe who made themſelves eminent, when the revolu-

tion was formed by the declaration of independence. Even Silas Deane, though he attempted to defraud, did not betray.

But when we ſpeak of military character, ſomething more is to be underſtood than conſtancy; and ſomething more *ought* to be underſtood than the Fabian ſyſtem of *doing nothing*. The *nothing* part can be done by any body. Old Mrs. Thompſon, the houſe-keeper of head-quarters (who threatened to make the ſun and the *wind* ſhine through Rivington of New-York) could have done it as well as Mr. Waſhington. Deborah would have been as good as Barak.

Mr. Waſhington had the nominal rank of Commander in Chief; but he was not ſo in fact. He had in reality only a ſeparate command. He had no controul over, or direction of, the army to the northward, under Gates, that captured Burgoyne; nor of that to the ſouth, under Green, that recovered the ſouthern States. The nominal rank, however, of Commander in chief, ſerved to throw upon him the luſtre of thoſe actions, and to make him appear as the ſoul and centre of all the military operations in America.

He commenced his command June 1775, during the time the Maſſachuſetts army lay before Boſton, and after the affair of Bunker-hill. The commencement of his command was the com-

mencement of inactivity. Nothing was afterwards done, or attempted to be done, during the nine months he remained before Boſton. If we may judge from the reſiſtance made at Concord and afterwards at Bunker-hill, there was a ſpirit of enterpriſe at that time, which the preſence of Mr. Waſhington chilled into cold defence. By the advantage of a good exterior, he attracts reſpect, which his habitual ſilence tends to preſerve; but he has not the talent of inſpiring ardour in an army. The enemy removed from Boſton in March 1776, to wait for reinforcements from Europe, and to take a more advantageous poſition at New York.

The inactivity of the campaign of 1775 on the part of General Waſhington, when the enemy had a leſs force than in any future period of the war, and the injudicious choice of poſitions taken by him in the campaign of 1776, when the enemy had its greateſt force, neceſſarily produced the loſſes and misfortunes that marked that gloomy campaign. The poſitions taken were either iſlands or necks of land. In the former, the enemy, by the aid of their ſhips could bring their whole force againſt a part of Gen. Waſhington's, as in the affair of Long-Iſland, and in the latter he might be ſhut up as in the bottom of a bag. This had nearly been the caſe at New York, and it was ſo in part; it was actually the caſe at Fort Waſhington; and would have

been the caſe at Fort Lee if Gen. Greene had not moved precipitately off, leaving every thing behind, and by gaining Hackinſach bridge, got out of the bag of Bergen neck. How far Mr. Waſhington, as a General, is blameable for theſe matters, I am not undertaking to determine, but they are evidently defects in military geography. The ſucceſsful ſkirmiſhes at the cloſe of that campaign (matters that would ſcarcely be noticed in a better ſtate of things) make the brilliant exploits of Gen. Waſhington's ſeven campaigns.—No wonder we ſee ſo much puſillanimity in the *Preſident* when we ſee ſo little enterpriſe in the *General.*

The campaign of 1777 became famous, not by any thing on the part of Gen. Waſhington, but by the capture of Gen. Burgoyne and the army under his command, by the Northern army at Saratoga under Gen. Gates. So totally diſtinct and unconnected were the two armies of Waſhington and Gates, and ſo independent was the latter of the authority of the nominal Commander in Chief, that the two Generals did not ſo much as correſpond, and it was only by a letter of Gen. (ſince Governor) Clinton, that General Waſhington was informed of that event. The Britiſh took poſſeſſion of Philadelphia this year, which they evacuated the next, juſt time enough to ſave their heavy baggage and fleet of tranſports from capture by the French

Admiral d'Eſtaing, who arrived at the mouth of the Delaware ſoon after.

The capture of Burgoyne gave an eclat in Europe to the American arms, and facilitated the alliance with France. The eclat, however, was not kept up by any thing on the part of Gen. Waſhington. The ſame unfortunate langour that marked his entrance into the field continued always. Diſcontents began to prevail ſtrongly againſt him, and a party was formed in Congreſs, whilſt ſitting at York-Town, in Pennſylvania, for removing him from the command of the army. The hope, however, of better times, the news of the alliance with France, and the unwillingneſs of ſhewing diſcontent, diſſipated the matter.

Nothing was done in the campaigns of 1778, 1779, 1780, in the part where Gen. Waſhington commanded, except the taking Stony Point by Gen. Wayne. The Southern States in the mean time were over-run by the enemy. They were afterwards recovered by Gen. Greene, who had in a very great meaſure created the army that accompliſhed that recovery. In all this Gen. Waſhington had no ſhare. The Fabian ſyſtem of war, followed by him, began now to unfold itſelf with all its evils, for what is Fabian war without Fabian means to ſupport it.

The finances of Congreſs, depending wholly on emiſſions of paper money, were exhauſted. Its credit was gone. The continental treaſury was not able to pay the expence of a brigade of waggons to tranſport the neceſſary ſtores to the army, and yet the ſole object, the eſtabliſhment of the revolution, was a thing of remote diſtance. The time I am now ſpeaking of is the latter end of the year 1780.

In this ſituation of things it was found not only expedient but abſolutely neceſſary for Congreſs to ſtate the whole caſe to its ally. I knew more of this matter (before it came into Congreſs or was known to General Waſhington) of its progreſs, and its iſſue, than I chuſe to ſtate in this letter. Col. John Laurens was ſent to France as Envoy Extraordinary on this occaſion, and by a private agreement between him and me I accompanied him. We ſailed from Boſton in the Alliance frigate, Feb. 11th, 1781. France had already done much in accepting and paying bills drawn by Congreſs. She was now called upon to do more. The event of Col. Laurens's miſſion, with the aid of the venerable miniſter, Franklin, was, that France gave in money, as a preſent, ſix millions of livres, and ten millions more as a loan, and agreed to ſend a fleet of not leſs than thirty ſail of the line, at her own expence, as an aid to America. Col. Laurens

and myſelf returned from Breſt the 1ſt of June following, taking with us two millions and an half of livres (upwards of one hundred thouſand pounds ſterling) of the money given, and convoying two ſhips with ſtores.

We arrived at Boſton the 25th Auguſt following. De Graſſe arrived with the French fleet in the Cheſapeak at the ſame time, and was afterwards joined by that of Barras, making 31 ſail of the line. The money was tranſported in waggons from Boſton to the Bank at Philadelphia, of which Mr. Thomas Willing, who has ſince put himſelf at the head of the liſt of petitioners in favour of the Britiſh treaty, was then Preſident, and it was by the aid of this money, and of this fleet, and of Rochambeau's army, that Cornwallis was taken; the lawrels of which have been unjuſtly given to Mr. Waſhington. His merit in that affair was no more than that of any other American officer.

I have had, and ſtill have, as much pride in the American revolution as any man, or as Mr. Waſhington has a right to have; but that pride has never made me forgetful from whence the great aid came that compleated the buſineſs. Foreign aid (that of France) was calculated upon at the commencement of the revolution. It is one of the ſubjects treated of in the pamphlet *Common Senſe*, but

as a matter that could not be hoped for, unleſs Independence was declared.

It is as well the ingratitude as the puſillanimity of Mr. Waſhington and the Waſhington faction, that has brought upon America the loſs of character ſhe now ſuffers in the world, and the numerous evils her commerce has undergone, and to which it is yet expoſed. The Britiſh miniſtry ſoon found out what ſort of men they had to deal with, and they dealt with them accordingly; and if further explanation was wanting, it has been fully given ſince in the ſnivelling addreſs of the New-York Chamber of Commerce to the Preſident, and in that of ſundry merchants of Philadelphia, which was not much better.

When the revolution of America was finally eſtabliſhed by the termination of the war, the world gave her credit for great character; and ſhe had nothing to do but to ſtand firm upon that ground. The Britiſh miniſtry had their hands too full of trouble to have provoked unneceſſarily a rupture with her, had ſhe ſhewn a proper reſolution to defend her rights. But encouraged as they were by the ſubmiſſive character of her executive adminiſtration, they proceeded from inſult to inſult till none more were left to be offered. The propoſals made by Sweden and Denmark to the American

adminiſtration were diſregarded. I know not if ſo much as an anſwer has been returned to them. The miniſter *penitentiary* (as ſome of the Britiſh prints called him) Mr. Jay, was ſent on a pilgrimage to London, to make all up by penance and petition. In the mean time the lengthy and drowſy writer of the pieces ſigned *Camillus* held himſelf in reſerve to vindicate every thing; and to ſound, in America, the tocſin of terror upon the inexhauſtible reſources of England. Her reſources, ſays he, are greater than thoſe of all the other powers. This man is ſo intoxicated with fear and finance that he knows not the difference between *plus* and *minus*—between an hundred pounds in hand, and an hundred pounds worſe than nothing.

The commerce of America, ſo far as it had been eſtabliſhed by all the treaties that had been formed prior to that by Jay, was free, and the principles upon which it was eſtabliſhed were good. That ground ought never to have been departed from. It was the juſtifiable ground of right, and no temporary difficulties ought to have induced an abandonment of it. The caſe now is otherwiſe. The ground, the ſcene, the pretenſions, the every thing, are changed. The commerce of America is, by Jay's treaty, put under foreign dominion. The ſea is not free for her. Her right to navigate it is re-

duced to the right of eſcaping; that is, until ſome ſhip of England or France, ſtops her veſſels and carries them into port. Every article of American produce, whether from the ſea or the land, fiſh, fleſh, vegetable, or manufacture, is, by Jay's treaty, made either contraband or ſeizable. Nothing is exempt. In all other treaties of commerce the article which enumerates the contraband articles, ſuch as fire arms, gun powder, &c. is followed by another article which enumerates the articles not contraband: but it is not ſo in Jay's treaty. There is no exempting article. Its place is ſupplied by the article for ſeizing and carrying into port; and the ſweeping phraſe of "proviſions and *other articles*," includes every thing. There never was ſuch a baſe and ſervile treaty of ſurrender ſince treaties began to exiſt.

This is the ground upon which America now ſtands. All her rights of commerce and navigation have to commence anew, and that with loſs of character to begin with. If there is ſenſe enough left in the heart to call a bluſh into the cheek, the Waſhington adminiſtration muſt be aſhamed to appear.———And as to you, ſir, treacherous in private friendſhip (for ſo you have been to me, and that in the day of danger) and a hypocrite in public life, the world will be puzzled to decide, whe-

ther you are an apoſtate or an impoſtor; whether you have abandoned good principles, or whether you ever had any?

THOMAS PAINE.

APPENDIX.

MEMORIAL

Addreſſed to JAMES MONROE, *Miniſter from the United States of America, to the French Republic.*

BY THOMAS PAINE.

N. B. The letter of Mr. Monroe, on page 20 is an anſwer to this Memorial.

Priſon of the Luxembourg, Sept. 10th, 1796.

I Addreſs this Memorial to you in conſequence of a letter I received from a friend, 18 Fructidor, (Sept. 4th) in which he ſays: "Mr. Monroe has "told me that he has no orders (meaning from the "American government) reſpecting you, but I am "ſure he will leave nothing undone to liberate you; "but, from what I learn from all the late Ameri- "cans, you are not conſidered, either by the gov- "ernment or by the individuals, as an American ci- "tizen. You have been made a French citizen, "which you have accepted, and you have further "made yourſelf a ſervant of the French Republic, "and it would be out of character for an Ameri- "can miniſter to interfere in their internal con-

" cerns. You muſt, therefore, either be liberated " out of compliment to America, or ſtand your " trial, which you have a right to demand."

This information was ſo unexpected by me, that I am at a loſs how to anſwer it. I know not on what principle it originates; whether from an idea that I had voluntarily abandoned my citizenſhip of America for that of France, or from any article in the American conſtitution applied to me. The firſt is untrue with reſpect to any intention on my part; and the ſecond is without foundation, as I ſhall ſhew in the courſe of this memorial.

The idea of conferring the honor of citizenſhip upon foreigners who had diſtinguiſhed themſelves in propagating the principles of liberty and humanity, in oppoſition to deſpotiſm, war and bloodſhed, was firſt propoſed by me to La Fayette, at the commencement of the French revolution, when his heart appeared to be warmed with thoſe principles. My motive in making this propoſal was to render the people of different nations more fraternal than they had been or then were. I obſerved that almoſt every branch of ſcience had poſſeſſed itſelf of the exerciſe of this right, ſo far as regarded its own inſtitution. Moſt of the academies and ſocieties in Europe conferred the rank of honorary member upon foreigners eminent in knowlege, and made them members of their literary or ſcientific republic,

without affecting or any ways diminiſhing their rights of citizenſhip in their own country, or in other ſocieties; and why the ſcience of government ſhould not have the ſame advantage, or why the people of one nation ſhould not, by their repreſentatives, exerciſe the right of conferring the honor of citizenſhip upon individuals eminent in another nation, without affecting *their* rights of citizenſhip in their proper country, is a problem yet to be ſolved.

I now proceed to remark on that part of the letter in which the writer ſays, that "from all he can "learn from the late Americans, I am not conſi- "dered, in America, either by the government or "by the individuals, as an American citizen."

In the firſt place I wiſh to aſk, what is here meant by the government of America? The members who compoſe the government are only individuals when in converſation, and who muſt probably hold very different opinions upon the ſubject. Have Congreſs as a body made any declaration reſpecting me, that they no longer conſider me as a citizen? If they have not, any thing they may otherwiſe ſay is no more than the opinion of individuals, and conſequently is not legal authority, nor any wiſe authority to deprive any man of his citizenſhip. Beſides, whether a man has forfeited his rights of citizenſhip is a queſtion not determinable

by Congreſs, but by a Court of Judicature and a Jury, and muſt depend upon evidence and the application of ſome law or article of the conſtitution to the caſe. No ſuch proceeding has yet been had, and conſequently I remain a citizen until it be had, be that determination what it may; for there can be no ſuch thing as a ſuſpenſion of rights in the interim.

I am aware of the article of the conſtitution which ſays, as nearly as I can recollect, that any citizen of the United States who ſhall accept any title, place, or office, from any foreign king, prince or ſtate, ſhall forfeit and loſe his right of citizenſhip of the United States.*

Had the article ſaid, that *any citizen of the United States, who ſhall be member of any foreign convention for the purpoſe of forming a free conſtitution, ſhall forfeit and loſe the right of citizenſhip of the United States*, the article had been directly applicable to me; but the idea of ſuch an article never could have entered the mind of the American Convention, and the preſent article is altogether foreign to the caſe with reſpect to me; for it ſuppoſes a government in actual exiſtence, and not a government diſſolved; and it ſuppoſes a citizen of America accepting titles

* Even this article does not exiſt in the manner here ſtated.

and offices under that government, and not a citizen of America who gives his aſſiſtance in a Convention choſen by the people for the purpoſe of forming a government *de novo*, founded on their authority.

The late conſtitution and government of France was diſſolved the 10th of Auguſt, 1792. The National Legiſlative Aſſembly then in being, ſuppoſed itſelf without authority to continue its ſittings, and it propoſed to the departments to elect, not another Legiſlative Body, but a Convention for the expreſs purpoſe of forming a conſtitution. When the Aſſembly were diſcourſing on this matter, ſome of the members ſaid, that they wiſhed to gain all the information poſſible upon the ſubject of free conſtitutions, and expreſſed a wiſh to invite foreigners of any nation to the Convention, who had diſtinguiſhed themſelves in defending, explaining, and propagating the principles of Liberty. It was on this occaſion that my name was mentioned in the Aſſembly. I was then in England. After this a deputation from a body of the French people, in order to remove any objection that might be made againſt my aſſiſting at the propoſed Convention, requeſted the Aſſembly, as their repreſentatives, to confer on me the title of French Citizen; after which I was elected in four different departments, as is already known.

The caſe therefore is, that I accepted nothing from any king, prince, or ſtate, nor from any government; for France was then without any government, except what aroſe from neceſſity and conſent. Neither did I *make myſelf a ſervant of the French Republic*, as the letter already alluded to expreſſes; for France at that time was not a Republic, not even in name. She was altogether a people in a ſtate of revolution.

It was not until the Convention met, that France was declared a Republic and monarchy aboliſhed; ſoon after which a committee was elected, of which I was choſen a member, to form a conſtitution, which was preſented to the Convention and read by Condorcet (who was alſo a member) the 15th and 16th of February following; but was not to be taken into conſideration till after the expiration of two months. The diſorders and the revolutionary government that took place after this put a ſtop to any further progreſs upon the caſe.

In thus employing myſelf upon the formation of a conſtitution, I certainly did nothing inconſiſtent with the American conſtitution. I took no oath of allegiance to France, nor any other oath whatever. I conſidered the citizenſhip they had preſented me with, as an honorary mark of reſpect paid to me, not only as a friend of liberty, but as an American

citizen. My acceptance of that, or of the deputyſhip, not conferred on me by any king, prince, or ſtate, but by a people in a ſtate of revolution and contending for liberty, required no transfer of my allegiance or of my citizenſhip from America to France. In America I was a real citizen, paying taxes annually; in France I was a volunteer friend, employing myſelf on a temporary ſervice. Every American in Paris knew that it was my conſtant intention to return to America, as ſoon as a conſtitution ſhould be eſtabliſhed in France, and that I anxiouſly waited for that event.

I ever muſt deny that any article of the American conſtitution can be applied either literally, intentionally, or conſtructively againſt me. It undoubtedly was the intention of the convention that framed the conſtitution, to preſerve the purity of the American Republic from being debaſed by foreign and foppiſh cuſtoms; but it could never be its intentions to act againſt the principles of liberty, by forbidding its citizens to aſſiſt in promoting thoſe principles in foreign countries. Neither could it be its intention to act againſt the principles of gratitude: France had aided America in the eſtabliſhment of her revolution, when invaded and oppreſſed by England and her auxilaries. France, in her turn, was invaded and oppreſſed by a combination of foreign deſpots. In this ſituation I conceived it an act of gratitude in me, as

a citizen of America, to render her in return the beſt ſervices I could perform. I came to France (for I was in England when I was elected) not to enjoy eaſe, emoluments, or foppiſh honours, as the article ſuppoſes; but to encounter difficulties and dangers in defence of liberty; and I much queſtion whether thoſe who now malignantly ſeek to turn this to my injury (for ſome I believe do) would have had courage to have done the ſame thing. I am ſure Gouv. Morris would not. He told me the ſecond day after my arrival in Paris, that the Auſtrians and Pruſſians, who were then at Verdun, would be in Paris in a fortnight. I have no idea, ſaid he, that ſeventy thouſand diſciplined troops can be ſtopt in their march by any power in France.

Beſides the reaſons I have already given for accepting the invitation to the Convention, I had another that has reference particularly to America, and which I mentioned to Mr. ——— the night before I left London to come to Paris; *that it was to the intereſt of America, that the ſyſtem of European governments ſhould be changed, and placed on the ſame principle with her own.*

It is certain that governments upon ſimilar principles agree better together, than thoſe that are founded on principles diſcordant with each other; and the ſame rule holds good with reſpect to the people living under them. In the latter caſe they offend each

other by pity or by reproach, and the discordancy carries itself into matters of commerce. I am not an ambitious man, but perhaps I have been an ambitious American. *I have wished to see America the mother church of government.*

I have now stated sufficient matter to shew, that the article in the constitution is not applicable to me, and that any such application of it to my injury, as well in circumstances as in rights, is illegal and unconstitutional. Neither do I believe that any jury in America, when they are informed of the whole of the case, would give a verdict to deprive me of my right upon that article. The citizens of America, I believe, are not very fond of permitting forced and indirect explanations to be put upon matters of this kind. I know not what were the merits of the case with respect to the person who was prosecuted for acting as prize-master to a French prize, but I know that the jury gave a verdict against the prosecution; the rights I have acquired are dear to me; they have been acquired by honorable means, and by dangerous service in the worst of times, and I cannot permit them to be wrested from me. I conceive it my duty to defend them, as the case involves a constitutional and public question, which is, how far the power of the federal government (it should have been said in this

place the executive) extends in depriving any citizen of his rights of citizenſhip, or of ſuſpending them.

That the explanation of national treaties belongs to Congreſs, is ſtrictly conſtitutional; but not the explanation of the conſtitution itſelf, upon a legal caſe, any more than the explaination of law in the caſe of individual citizens. Theſe are altogether judiciary queſtions. It is, however, worth obſerving, that Congreſs in explaining the article of the treaty with reſpect to French prizes and French privateers, confined itſelf ſtrictly to the letter of the article. Let them explain the article of the conſtitution with reſpect to me in the ſame manner, and that deciſion, did it appertain to them, could not deprive me of my rights of citizenſhip or ſuſpend them, for I have accepted nothing from any king, prince, ſtate, or government.

Painful as the want of liberty may be, it is a conſolation to believe, that my impriſonment proves to the world that I had no ſhare in the murderous ſyſtem that raged during the reign of terror. That I was an enemy to it both morally and politically, is known to all that had any knowledge of me; and could I have written French as well as I can Engliſh, I would have publicly expoſed its wickedneſs and ſhewn the ruin with which it was pregnant. Thoſe who have eſteemed me on former occaſions, whether in America or in Europe will, I

know, feel no cauſe to abate that eſteem, when they reflect, *that impriſonment with preſervation of character is preferable to liberty with diſgrace.*

The letter quoted in the firſt page of this memorial ſays, that "it would be out of character for an "American miniſter to interfere in the internal "affairs of France." This goes on the idea that I am a citizen of France, and a member of the Convention, which is not the fact. The Convention included me in the vote for diſmiſſing foreigners from the Convention, and the Committees impriſoned me as a foreigner. It alſo ſuppoſes decidedly, that the article in the American conſtitution reſpecting grants made to American citizens by foreign kings, princes, or ſtates, is applicable to me; which is the very point in queſtion, and againſt the application of which I contend. I ſtate evidence to the miniſter to ſhew, that I am not within the letter or meaning of that article; that it cannot operate againſt me; and I apply to him for the protection that I conceive I have a right to aſk and to receive. The internal affairs of France are out of the queſtion with reſpect to my application, or his interference. I aſk it not as a citizen of France, for I am not one; I aſk it not as a member of the Convention, for I am not one; I aſk it not as a man, againſt whom there is any accuſation, for there is none; I aſk it not as an exile

from America, whoſe liberties I have honorably and generouſly contributed to defend and eſtabliſh; I aſk it as a citizen of America, deprived of his liberty in France under the plea of his being a foreigner; and I aſk it, becauſe I conceive I am entitled to it, upon every principle of conſtitutional juſtice and national honor.

THOMAS PAINE.

NEW BOOKS.

THE following lateſt works of THOMAS PAINE are publiſhed at the Office of the Aurora, No. 112 Market ſtreet, Philadelphia. Bookſellers may be ſupplied with them in any quantity. The Editions were publiſhed under the eye of the Author, and are therefore correct.

Age of Reaſon, 1ſt Part.
Do. 2d Part.
Diſſertation on the firſt principles of Government.
Decline and fall of the Engliſh Syſtem of Finance.

The following works were alſo lately publiſhed at the Office of the Aurora.

Private letters of General Waſhington in June and July 1776.

French Conſtitution—a French and an Engliſh Edition.

French Calendar for the year V.
Debates on the Britiſh Treaty.
Condorcet on the Human Mind.
Zimmerman on ſolitude, &c. &c.

AGRARIAN JUSTICE,

OPPOSED TO

AGRARIAN LAW,

AND TO

AGRARIAN MONOPOLY.

BEING A PLAN FOR

MELIORATING THE CONDITION OF MAN,

By Creating in every Nation,

A NATIONAL FUND,

To Pay to every Person, when arrived at the Age of TWENTY-ONE YEARS, the Sum of FIFTEEN POUNDS Sterling, to enable HIM or HER to begin the World!

AND ALSO,

Ten Pounds Sterling per Annum during life to every Person now living of the Age of FIFTY YEARS, and to all others when they shall arrive at that Age, to enable them to live in Old Age without Wretchedness, and go decently out of the World.

BY *THOMAS PAINE*,

AUTHOR OF COMMON SENSE, RIGHTS OF MAN, AGE OF REASON, &c. &c.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY R. FOLWELL,

FOR

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN BACHE.

PREFACE.

THE *following little Piece was written in the winter of* 1795 *and* '96; *and, as I had not determined whether to publiſh it during the preſent war, or to wait till the commencement of a peace, it has lain by me, without alteration or addition, from the time it was written.*

What has determined me to publiſh it now is, a Sermon, preached by WATSON, Biſhop of Landaff. *Some of my readers will recollect, that this Biſhop wrote a book, intitled,* An Apology for the Bible, *in anſwer to my* Second Part of the Age of Reaſon. *I procured a copy of his book, and he may depend upon hearing from me on that ſubject.*

At the end of the Biſhop's book is a liſt of the Works he has written, among which is the Sermon alluded to; it is intitled,

"THE WISDOM AND GOODNESS OF GOD, IN HAVING MADE BOTH RICH AND POOR; *with an Appendix, containing* REFLECTIONS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF ENGLAND AND FRANCE."

The error contained in the title of this Sermon, determined me to publish my Agrarian Justice. *It is wrong to say that God made* Rich *and* Poor; *he made only* Male *and* Female; *and he gave them the earth for their inheritance.* *

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Instead of preaching to encourage one part of mankind in insolence * * *

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it would be better that Priests employed their time to render the general condition of man less miserable than it is. Practical religion consists in doing good; and the only way of serving God is, that of endeavouring to make his creation happy. All preaching that has not this for its object, is nonsense and hypocrisy.

THOMAS PAINE.

AGRARIAN JUSTICE,

OPPOSED TO

AGRARIAN LAW,

AND TO AGRARIAN MONOPOLY.

BEING A PLAN FOR

Meliorating the Condition of Man, &c.

TO preſerve the benefits of what is called civilized life, and to remedy, at the ſame time, the evil it has produced, ought to be conſidered as one of the firſt objects of reformed legiſlation.

Whether that ſtate that is proudly, perhaps erroneouſly, called civilization, has moſt promoted or moſt injured the general happineſs of man, is a queſtion that may be ſtrongly conteſted.—On one ſide, the ſpectator is dazzled by ſplendid appearances; on the other, he is ſhocked by extremes of wretchedneſs;

both of which he has erected. The moſt affluent and the moſt miſerable of the human race are to be found in the countries that are called civilized.

To underſtand what the ſtate of ſociety ought to be, it is neceſſary to have ſome idea of the natural and primitive ſtate of man; ſuch as it is at this day among the Indians of North America. There is not, in that ſtate, any of thoſe ſpectacles of human miſery which poverty and want preſent to our eyes, in all the towns and ſtreets of Europe. Poverty, therefore, is a thing created by that which is called civilized life. It exiſts not in the natural ſtate. On the other hand, the natural ſtate is without thoſe advantages which flow from Agriculture, Arts, Science, and Manufactures.

The life of an Indian is a continual holiday, compared with the poor of Europe; and, on the other hand, it appears to be abject when compared to the rich. Civilization, therefore, or that which is ſo called, has operated, two ways, to make one part of ſociety more affluent, and the other part more wretched, than would have been the lot of either in a natural ſtate.

It is always poſſible to go from the natural to the civilized ſtate, but it is never poſſible to go from the civilized to the natural ſtate. The

reaſon is, that man, in a natural ſtate, ſubſiſting by hunting, requires ten times the quantity of land to range over, to procure himſelf ſuſtenance, than would ſupport him in a civilized ſtate, where the earth is cultivated. When therefore a country becomes populous by the additional aids of cultivation, arts, and ſcience, there is a neceſſity of preſerving things in that ſtate; becauſe without it, there cannot be ſuſtenance for more, perhaps, than a tenth part of its inhabitants. The thing therefore now to be done, is, to remedy the evils, and preſerve the benefits, that have ariſen to ſociety, by paſſing from the natural to that which is called the civilized ſtate.

Taking then the matter up on this ground, the firſt principle of civilization ought to have been, and ought ſtill to be, that the condition of every perſon born into the world, after a ſtate of civilization commences, ought not to be worſe than if he had been born before that period. But the fact is, that the condition of millions, in every country in Europe, is far worſe than if they had been born before civilization began, or had been born among the Indians of North America of the preſent day. I will ſhew how this fact has happened.

It is a poſition not to be controverted, that the earth, in its natural uncultivated ſtate, was, and ever would have continued to be, the COMMON PROPERTY OF THE HUMAN RACE.

In that ſtate every man would have been born to property. He would have been a joint life-proprietor with the reſt in the property of the ſoil, and in all its natural productions, vegetable and animal.

But the earth, in its natural ſtate, as before ſaid, is capable of ſupporting but a ſmall number of inhabitants compared with what it is capable of doing in a cultivated ſtate. And as it is impoſſible to ſeparate the improvement made by cultivation, from the earth itſelf, upon which that improvement is made, the idea of landed property aroſe from that inſeparable connection; but it is nevertheleſs true, that it is the value of the improvement only, and not the earth itſelf, that is individual property. Every proprietor therefore of cultivated land, owes to the community a *ground-rent;* for I know no better term to expreſs the idea by, for the land which he holds: and it is from this ground rent that the fund propoſed in this plan is to iſſue.

It is deducible, as well from the nature of the thing, as from all the hiſtories tranſmitted to us, that the idea of landed property commenced with cultivation, and that there was no ſuch thing as landed property before that time. It could not exiſt in the firſt ſtate of man, that of hunters. It did not exiſt in the ſecond ſtate, that of ſhepherds: Neither Abraham, Iſaac, Jacob, nor Job, ſo far as the hiſtory

of the Bible may be credited in probable things, were owners of land. Their property conſiſted, as is always enumerated, in flocks and herds, and they travelled with them from place to place. The frequent contentions, at that time, about the uſe of a well in the dry country of Arabia, where thoſe people lived, ſhew alſo there was no landed property. It was not admitted that land could be located as property.

There could be no ſuch thing as landed property originally. Man did not make the earth, and, though he had a natural right to *occupy* it, he had no right to *locate* as *his property* in perpetuity any part of it: neither did the Creator of the earth open a land-office, from whence the firſt title-deeds ſhould iſſue. From whence then aroſe the idea of landed property? I anſwer as before, that when cultivation began, the idea of landed property began with it, from the impoſſibility of ſeparating the improvement made by cultivation from the earth itſelf, upon which that improvement was made. The value of the improvement ſo far exceeded the value of the natural earth, at that time, as to abſorb it; till, in the end, the common right of all became confounded into the cultivated right of the individual. But they are, nevertheleſs, diſtinct ſpecies of rights, and will continue to be ſo as long as the earth endures.

It is only by tracing things to their origin that we can gain rightful ideas of them, and it is by gaining ſuch ideas that we diſcover the boundary that divides right from wrong, and which teaches every man to know his own. I have intitled this tract *Agrarian Juſtice*, to diſtinguiſh it from *Agrarian Law*. Nothing could be more unjuſt than Agrarian Law in a country improved by cultivation; for though every man, as an inhabitant of the earth, is a joint proprietor of it in its natural ſtate, it does not follow that he is a joint proprietor of cultivated earth. The additional value made by cultivation, after the ſyſtem was admitted, became the property of thoſe who did it, or who inherited it from them, or who purchaſed it. It had originally an owner. Whilſt, therefore, I advocate the right, and intereſt myſelf in the hard caſe of all thoſe who have been thrown out of their natural inheritance by the introduction of the ſyſtem of landed property, I equally defend the right of the poſſeſſor to the part which is his.

Cultivation is, at leaſt, one of the greateſt natural improvements ever made by human invention. It has given to created earth a tenfold value. But the landed monopoly, that began with it, has produced the greateſt evil. It has diſpoſſeſſed more than half the inhabitants of every nation of their natural inheritance, without providing for them, as ought to have been done, as an indemnification for that loſs,

and has thereby created a ſpecies of poverty and wrechedneſs that did not exiſt before.

In advocating the caſe of the perſons thus diſpoſſeſſed, it is a right and not a charity that I am pleading for. But it is that kind of right, which, being neglected at firſt, could not be brought forward afterwards, till heaven had opened the way by a revolution in the ſyſtem of government. Let us then do honour to revolutions by juſtice, and give currency to their principles by bleſſings.

Having thus, in a few words, opened the merits of the caſe, I proceed to the plan I have to propoſe, which is,

To create a National Fund, out of which there ſhall be paid to every perſon, when arrived at the age of twenty-one years, the ſum of Fifteen Pounds ſterling, *as a compenſation in part, for the loſs of his or her natural inheritance, by the introduction of the ſyſtem of landed property.*

AND ALSO,

The ſum of Ten Pounds per annum, *during life, to every perſon now living, of the age of fifty years, and to all others as they ſhall arrive at that age.*

MEANS BY WHICH THE FUND IS TO BE CREATED.

I have already eſtabliſhed the principle, namely, that the earth, in its natural uncultivated ſtate, was, and ever would have continued to be, the COMMON PROPERTY OF THE HUMAN RACE—that in that ſtate, every perſon would have been born to property—and that the ſyſtem of landed property, by its inſeparable connection with cultivation, and with what is called civilized life, has abſorbed the property of all thoſe whom it diſpoſſeſſed, without providing, as ought to have been done, an indemnification for that loſs.

The fault, however, is not in the preſent poſſeſſors. No complaint is intended, or ought to be alleged againſt them, unleſs they adopt the crime by oppoſing juſtice. The fault is in the ſyſtem, and it has ſtolen imperceptibly upon the world, aided afterwards by the Agrarian law of the ſword. But the fault can be made to reform itſelf by ſucceſſive generations, without diminiſhing or deranging the property of any of the preſent poſſeſſors, and yet the operation of the fund can commence, and be in full activity, the firſt year of its eſtabliſhment, or ſoon after, as I ſhall ſhew.

It is propoſed that the payments, as already ſtated, be made to every perſon, rich or poor. It is beſt to make it ſo, to prevent invidious diſtinctions. It is alſo right it ſhould be ſo, becauſe it is in lieu of the natural inheritance,

which, as a right, belongs to every man, over and above the property he may have created or inherited from thoſe who did. Such perſons as do not chooſe to receive it, can throw it into the common fund.

Taking it then for granted, that no perſon ought to be in a worſe condition when born under what is called a ſtate of civilization, than he would have been, had he been born in a ſtate of nature, and that civilization ought to have made, and ought ſtill to make, proviſion for that purpoſe, it can only be done by ſubtracting from property, a portion equal in value to the natural inheritance it has abſorbed.

Various methods may be propoſed for this purpoſe, but that which appears to be the beſt, not only becauſe it will operate without deranging any preſent poſſeſſors, or without interfering with the collection of taxes, or emprunts neceſſary for the purpoſe of government and the revolution, but becauſe it will be the leaſt troubleſome and the moſt effectual, and alſo becauſe the ſubtraction will be made at a time that beſt admits it, which is, at the moment that property is paſſing by the death of one perſon to the poſſeſſion of another. In this caſe, the bequether gives nothing; the receiver pays nothing. The only matter to him is, that the monopoly of natural inheritance, to which there never was a right, be-

gins to ceaſe in his perſon. A generous man would not wiſh it to continue, and a juſt man will rejoice to ſee it aboliſhed.

My ſtate of health prevents my making ſufficient enquiries with reſpect to the doctrine of probabilities, whereon to found calculations with ſuch degrees of certainty as they are capable of. What, therefore, I offer on this head is more the reſult of obſervation and reflection, than of received information; but I believe it will be found to agree ſufficiently enough with fact.

In the firſt place, taking twenty-one years as the epoch of maturity, all the property of a nation, real and perſonal, is always in the poſſeſſion of perſons above that age. It is then neceſſary to know as a datum of calculation, the average of years which perſons above that age will live. I take this average to be about thirty years, for though many perſons will live forty, fifty, or ſixty years after the age of twenty-one years, others will die much ſooner, and ſome in every year of that time.

Taking then thirty years as the average of time, it will give, without any material variation, one way or other, the average of time in which the whole property or capital of a nation, or a ſum equal thereto, will have paſſed through one entire revolution in deſcent, that is, will have gone by deaths to new poſ-

ſeſſors; for though, in many inſtances, ſome parts of this capital will remain forty, fifty, or ſixty years in the poſſeſſion of one perſon, other parts will have revolved two or three times before that thirty years expire, which will bring it to that average; for were one half the capital of a nation to revolve twice in thirty years, it would produce the ſame fund as if the whole revolved once.

Taking, then, thirty years as the average of time in which the whole capital of a nation, or a ſum equal thereto, will revolve once, the thirtieth part thereof will be the ſum that will revolve every year, that is, will go by deaths to new poſſeſſors; and this laſt ſum being thus known, and the ratio per cent. to be ſubtracted from it being determined, will give the annual amount or income of the propoſed fund, to be applied as already mentioned.

In looking over the diſcourſe of the Engliſh miniſter, Pitt, in his opening of what is called in England, the budget, (the ſcheme of finance for the year 1796,) I find an eſtimate of the national capital of that country. As this eſtimate of a national capital is prepared ready to my hand, I take it as a datum to act upon. When a calculation is made upon the known capital of any nation, combined with its population, it will ſerve as a ſcale for any other nation, in proportion as its capital and population be more or leſs. I am the more diſ-

poſed to take this eſtimate of Mr. Pitt, for the purpoſe of ſhewing to that miniſter, upon his own calculation, how much better money may be employed, than in waſting it, as he has done, on the wild project of ſetting up Bourbon kings. What, in the name of Heaven, are Bourbon kings to the people of England? It is better that the people have bread.

Mr. Pitt ſtates the national capital of England, real and perſonal, to be one thouſand three hundred millions ſterling, which is about one-fourth part of the national capital of France, including Belgia. The event of the laſt harveſt in each country proves that the ſoil of France is more productive than that of England, and that it can better ſupport twenty-four or twenty-five millions of inhabitants than that of England can ſeven, or ſeven and an half.

The 30th part of this capital of £1,300,000,000 is £.43,333,333, which is the part that will revolve every year by deaths in that country to new poſſeſſors; and the ſum that will annually revolve in France in the proportion of four to one, will be about one hundred and ſeventy-three millions ſterling. From this ſum of £.43,333,333 annually revolving, is to be ſubtracted the value of the natural inheritance abſorbed in it, which perhaps, in fair juſtice, cannot be taken at leſs, and ought not to be taken for more, than a tenth part.

It will always happen, that of the property thus revolving by deaths every year, part will deſcend in a direct line to ſons and daughters, and the other part collaterally, and the proportion will be found to be about three to one; that is, about thirty millions of the above ſum will deſcend to direct heirs, and the remaining ſum of £.13,333,333 to more diſtant relations, and part to ſtrangers.

Conſidering then that man is always related to ſociety, that relationſhip will become comparatively greater in proportion as the next of kin is more diſtant: It is therefore conſiſtent with civilization to ſay, that where there are no direct heirs, ſociety ſhall be heir to a part over and above the tenth part *due* to ſociety. If this additional part be from five to ten or twelve per cent. in proportion as the next of kin be nearer or more remote, ſo as to average with the eſcheats that may fall, which ought always to go to ſociety and not to the government, an addition of ten per cent. more, the produce from the annual ſum of £.43,333,333 will be,

From 30,000,000	at ten per cent. .	3,000,000
From 13,333,333	at ten pr. ct. with the addition of ten per cent. more	2,666,666
£.43,333,333	. . . . .	£.5,666,666

Having thus arrived at the annual amount of the propoſed fund, I come, in the next place, to ſpeak of the population proportioned to this fund, and to compare it with uſes to which the fund is to be applied.

The population (I mean that of England) does not exceed ſeven millions and a half, and the number of perſons above the age of fifty will in that caſe be about four hundred thouſand. There would not however be more than that number that would accept the propoſed ten pounds ſterling per annum, though they would be entitled to it. I have no idea it would be accepted by many perſons who had a yearly income of two or three hundred pounds ſterling. But as we often ſee inſtances of rich people falling into ſudden poverty, even at the age of ſixty, they would always have the right of drawing all the arrears due to them.—Four millions, therefore, of the above annual ſum of £.5,666,666, will be required for four hundred thouſand aged perſons, at ten pounds ſterling each.

I come now to ſpeak of the perſons annually arriving at twenty-one years of age. If all the perſons who died were above the age of twenty-one years, the number of perſons annually arriving at that age, muſt be equal to the annual number of deaths to keep the population ſtationary. But the greater part die under the age of twenty-one, and there-

fore the number of perſons annually arriving at twenty-one, will be leſs than half the num- of deaths. The whole number of deaths upon a population of ſeven millions and a half, will be about 220,000 annually. The number arriving at twenty-one years of age will be about 100,000. The whole number of theſe will not receive the propoſed fifteen pounds, for the reaſons already mentioned, though, as in the former caſe, they would be entitled to it. Admitting then that a tenth part declined receiving it, the amount would ſtand thus :

Fund annually		£.5,666,666
To 400,000 aged perſons at £.10 each	£.4,000,000	
To 90,000 perſons of 21 years, 15*l.* ſter. ea.	1,350,000	
		5,350,000
remains		£.316,666

There are in every country a number of blind and lame perſons, totally incapable of earning a livelihood. But as it will always happen that the greater number of blind perſons will be among thoſe who are above the age of fifty years, they will be provided for in that claſs. The remaining ſum of £.316,666, will provide for the lame and blind under that age, at the ſame rate of £.10 annually for each perſon.

Having now gone through all the neceſſary calculations, and ſtated the particulars of the plan, I ſhall conclude with ſome obſervations.

It is not charity but a right—not bounty but juſtice, that I am pleading for. The preſent ſtate of what is called civilization, is * * * * * It is the reverſe of what it ought to be, and * * * * * * The contraſt of affluence and wretchedneſs continually meeting and offending the eye, is like dead and living bodies chained together. Though I care as little about riches as any man, I am a friend to riches becauſe they are capable of good. I care not how affluent ſome may be, provided that none be miſerable in conſequence of it. But it is impoſſible to enjoy affluence with the felicity it is capable of being enjoyed, whilſt ſo much miſery is mingled in the ſcene. The ſight of the miſery, and the unpleaſant ſenſations it ſuggeſts, which, though they may be ſuffocated, cannot be extinguiſhed, are a greater draw-back upon the felicity of affluence than the propoſed 10 per cent. upon property is worth. He that would not give the one to get rid of the other, has no charity, even for himſelf.

There are, in every country, ſome magnificent charities eſtabliſhed by individuals. It is, however, but little that any individual can do, when the whole extent of the miſery to be relieved be conſidered. He may ſatisfy his conſcience,

but not his heart. He may give all that he has, and that all will relieve but little. It is only by organizing civilization upon ſuch principles as to act like a ſyſtem of pullies, that the whole weight of miſery can be removed.

The plan here propoſed will reach the whole. It will immediately relieve and take out of view three claſſes of wretchedneſs. The blind, the lame, and the aged poor; and it will furniſh the riſing generation with means to prevent their becoming poor; and it will do this, without deranging or interfering with any national meaſures. To ſhew that this will be the caſe, it is ſufficient to obſerve, that the operation and effect of the plan will, in all caſes, be the ſame, as if every individual were *voluntarily* to make his will, and diſpoſe of his property, in the manner here propoſed.

But it is juſtice and not charity, that is the principle of the plan. In all great caſes it is neceſſary to have a principle more univerſally active than charity; and with reſpect to juſtice, it ought not to be left to the choice of detached individuals, whether they will do juſtice or not. Conſidering then the plan on the ground of juſtice, it ought to be the act of the whole, growing ſpontaneouſly out of the principles of the revolution, and the reputation of it to be national and not individual.

A plan upon this principle would benefit

the revolution, by the energy that ſprings from the conſciouſneſs of juſtice. It would multiply alſo the national reſources; for property, like vegetation, encreaſes by off-ſets. When a young couple begin the world, the difference is exceedingly great, whether they begin with nothing or with fifteen pounds a-piece. With this aid they could buy a cow, and implements to cultivate a few acres of land; and inſtead of becoming burthens upon ſociety, which is always the caſe, where children are produced faſter than they can be fed, would be put in the way of becoming uſeful and profitable citizens. The national domains alſo would ſell the better, if pecuniary aids were provided to cultivate them in ſmall lots.

It is the practice of what has unjuſtly obtained the name of civilization (and the practice merits not to be called either charity or policy) to make ſome proviſion for perſons becoming poor and wretched, only at the time they become ſo.—Would it not, even as a matter of economy, be far better, to deviſe means to prevent their becoming poor. This can beſt be done, by making every perſon, when arrived at the age of twenty-one years, an inheritor of ſomething to begin with. The rugged face of ſociety, chequered with the extremes of affluence and of want, proves that ſome extraordinary violence has been committed upon it, and calls on juſtice for redreſs. The great maſs of the poor, in all countries,

are become an hereditary race, and it is next to impoſſible for them to get out of that ſtate of themſelves. It ought alſo to be obſerved, that this maſs increaſes in all countries that are called civilized. More perſons fall annually into it, than get out of it.

Though in a plan, in which juſtice and humanity are the foundation-principles, intereſt ought not to be admitted into the calculation, yet it is always of advantage to the eſtabliſhment of any plan, to ſhew that it is beneficial as a matter of intereſt. The ſucceſs of any propoſed plan, ſubmitted to public conſideration, muſt finally depend on the numbers intereſted in ſupporting it, united with the juſtice of its principles.

The plan here propoſed will benefit all, without injuring any. It will conſolidate the intereſt of the republic with that of the individual. To the numerous claſs diſpoſſeſſed of their natural inheritance by the ſyſtem of landed property, it will be an act of national juſtice. To perſons dying poſſeſſed of moderate fortunes, it will operate as a tontine to their children, more beneficial than the ſum of money paid into the fund: and it will give to the accumulation of riches a degree of ſecurity, that none of the old governments of Europe, now tottering on their foundations, can give.

I do not ſuppoſe that more than one family in ten, in any of the countries of Europe, has, when the head of the family dies, a clear property left of five hundred pounds ſterling. To all ſuch, the plan is advantageous. That property would pay fifty pounds into the fund, and if there were only two children under age, they would receive fifteen pounds each (thirty pounds) on coming of age, and be entitled to ten pounds a year after fifty. It is from the over grown acquiſition of property that the fund will ſupport itſelf; and I know that the poſſeſſors of ſuch property in England, though they would eventually be benefited by the protection of nine-tenths of it, will exclaim againſt the plan. But, without entering into any enquiry how they came by that property, let them recollect that they have been the advocates of this war, and that Mr. Pitt has already laid on more new taxes to be raiſed annually upon the people of England, and that for ſupporting the deſpotiſm of Auſtria and the Bourbons, againſt the liberties of France, than would annually pay all the ſums propoſed in this plan.

I have made the calculations, ſtated in this plan, upon what is called perſonal, as well as upon landed property. The reaſon for making it upon land is already explained; and the reaſon for taking perſonal property into the calculation, is equally well founded, though on a different principle. Land, as before ſaid, is

the free gift of the Creator in common to the human race. Perſonal property is the *effect of Society;* and it is as impoſſible for an individual to acquire perſonal property without the aid of Society, as it is for him to make land originally. Separate an individual from ſociety, and give him an iſland or a continent to poſſeſs, and he cannot acquire perſonal property. He cannot become rich. So inſeparably are the means connected with the end, in all caſes, that where the former do not exiſt, the latter cannot be obtained. All accumulation, therefore, of perſonal property, beyond what a man's own hands produce, is derived to him by living in ſociety; and he owes, on every principle of juſtice, of gratitude, and of civilization, a part of that accumulation back again to ſociety from whence the whole came. This is putting the matter on a general principle, and perhaps it is beſt to do ſo; for if we examine the caſe minutely, it will be found, that the accumulation of perſonal property is, in many inſtances, the effect of paying too little for the labour that produced it; the conſequence of which is, that the working hand periſhes in old age, and the employer abounds in affluence. It is, perhaps, impoſſible to proportion exactly the price of labour to the profits it produces; and it will alſo be ſaid, as an apology for injuſtice, that were a workman to receive an increaſe of wages daily, he would not ſave it againſt old age, nor be much the better for it in the interium. Make, then, ſociety the trea-

ſurer, to guard it for him in a common fund; for it is no reaſon, that becauſe he might not make a good uſe of it for himſelf, that another ſhall take it.

The ſtate of civilization that has prevailed throughout Europe, is as unjuſt in its principle, as it is horrid in its effects; and it is the conſciouſneſs of this, and the apprehenſion that ſuch a ſtate cannot continue, when once inveſtigation begins in any country, that makes the poſſeſſors of property dread every idea of a revolution. It is the *hazard* and not the principles of a revolution that retards their progreſs. This being the caſe, it is neceſſary as well for the protection of property, as for the ſake of juſtice and humanity, to form a ſyſtem, that whilſt it preſerves one part of ſociety from wretchedneſs, ſhall ſecure the other from depredation.

The ſuperſtitious awe, the enſlaving reverence, that formerly ſurrounded affluence, is paſſing away in all countries, and leaving the poſſeſſor of property to the convulſion of accidents. When wealth and ſplendour, inſtead of faſcinating the multitude, excite emotions of diſguſt; when, inſtead of drawing forth admiration, it is beheld as an inſult upon wretchedneſs; when the oſtentatious appearance it makes, ſerves to call the right of it in queſtion, the caſe of property becomes critical, and

it is only in a ſyſtem of juſtice that the poſſeſſor can contemplate ſecurity.

To remove the danger, it is neceſſary to remove the antipathies, and this can only be done by making property productive of a national bleſſing, extending to every individual. When the riches of one man above another ſhall increaſe the national fund in the ſame proportion; when it ſhall be ſeen that the proſperity of that fund depends on the proſperity of individuals; when the more riches a man acquires, the better it ſhall be for the general maſs; it is then that antipathies will ceaſe, and property be placed on the permanent baſis of national intereſt and protection.

I have no property in France to become ſubject to the plan I propoſe. What I have, which is not much, is in the United States of America. But I will pay one hundred pounds ſterling towards this fund in France, the inſtant it ſhall be eſtabliſhed; and I will pay the ſame ſum in England, whenever a ſimilar eſtabliſhment ſhall take place in that country.

A revolution in the ſtate of civilization, is the neceſſary companion of revolutions in the ſyſtem of government. If a revolution in any country be from bad to good, or from good to bad, the ſtate of what is called civilization in that country, muſt be made conformable thereto, to give that revolution effects. Deſ-

potic government ſupports itſelf by abject civilization, in which debaſement of the human mind, and wretchedneſs in the maſs of the people, are the chief criterians. Such governments conſider man merely as an animal; that the exerciſe of intellectual faculty is not his privilege; *that he has n thing to do with the laws, but to obey them;** and they politically depend more upon breaking the ſpirit of the people by poverty, than they fear enraging it by deſperation.

It is a revolution in the ſtate of civilization, that will give perfection to the revolution of France. Already the conviction, that government, by repreſentation, is the true ſyſtem of government, is ſpreading itſelf faſt in the world. The reaſonableneſs of it can be ſeen by all. The juſtneſs of it makes itſelf felt even by its oppoſers. But when a ſyſtem of civilization, growing out of that ſyſtem of government, ſhall be ſo organized, that not a man or woman born in the republic, but ſhall inherit ſome means of beginning the world, and ſee before them the certainty of eſcaping the miſeries that under other governments accompany old age, the revolution of France will have an advocate and an ally in the heart of all nations.

* Expreſſion of Horſley, an Engliſh Biſhop, in the Engliſh parliament.

An army of principles will penetrate where an army of ſoldiers cannot—It will ſucceed where diplomatic management would fail—It is neither the Rhine, the Channel, nor the Ocean, that can arreſt its progreſs—It will march on the horizon of the world, and it will conquer.

THOMAS PAINE.

Means for carrying the propoſed Plan into Execution, and to render it at the ſame time conducive to the public Intereſt.

I.

Each canton ſhall elect in its primary aſſemblies, three perſons, as commiſſioners for that canton, who ſhall take cognizance, and keep a regiſter of all matters happening in that canton, conformable to the charter that ſhall be eſtabliſhed by law, for carrying this plan into execution.

II.

The law ſhall fix the manner in which the property of deceaſed perſons ſhall be aſcertained.

III.

When the amount of the property of any deceaſed perſon ſhall be aſcertained, the principal heir to that property, or the eldeſt of the co-heirs, if of lawful age, or if under age, the perſon authorized by the will of the deceaſed to repreſent him, or them, ſhall give bond to the commiſſioners of the canton, to pay the ſaid tenth part thereof within the ſpace of one year, in four equal quarterly payments, or ſooner, at the choice of the payers. One-half of the whole property ſhall remain as ſecurity until the bond be paid off.

IV.

The bond ſhall be regiſtered in the office of the commiſſioners of the canton, and the original bonds ſhall be dopoſited in the national bank at Paris. The bank ſhall publiſh every quarter of a year the amount of the bonds in its poſſeſſion, and alſo the bonds that ſhall have been paid off, or what parts thereof, ſince the laſt quarterly publication.

V.

The national bank ſhall iſſue bank notes upon the ſecurity of the bonds in its poſſeſſion. The notes ſo iſſued, ſhall be applied to pay the penſions of aged perſons, and the compenſations to perſons arriving at twenty-one years of age.—It is both reaſonable and generous to ſuppoſe, that perſons not under immediate neceſſity, will ſuſpend their right of drawing on the fund, until it acquire, as it will do, a greater degree of ability. In this caſe, it is propoſed, that an honorary regiſter be kept in each canton, of the names of the perſons thus ſuſpending that right, at leaſt during the preſent war.

VI.

As the inheritors of property muſt always take up their bonds in four quarterly payments, or ſooner if they chooſe, there will always be numeraire arriving at the bank after the expiration of the firſt quarter, to exchange for the bank notes that ſhall be brought in.

VII.

The bank notes being thus got into circulation, upon the beſt of all poſſible ſecurity, that of actual property, to more than four times the amount of the bonds upon which the notes are iſſued, and with numeraire continually arriving at the bank to exchange or pay them off whenever they ſhall be preſented for that purpoſe, they will acquire a permanent value in all parts of the republic. They can therefore be received in payment of taxes or emprunts, equal to numeraire, becauſe the government can always receive numeraire for them at the bank.

VIII.

It will be neceſſary that the payments of the ten per cent. *be made in numeraire for the firſt year, from the eſtabliſhment of the plan. But after the expiration of the firſt year, the inheritors of property may pay the ten* per cent. *either in bank notes iſſued upon the fund, or in numeraire. If the payments be in numeraire, it will lie as a depoſit at the bank, to be exchanged for a quantity of notes equal to that amount; and if in notes iſſued upon the fund, it will cauſe a demand upon the fund equal thereto; and thus the operation of the plan will create means to carry itſelf into execution.*

FINIS.